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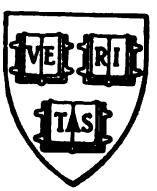

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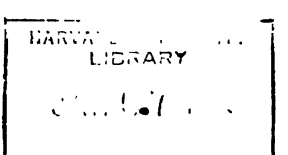
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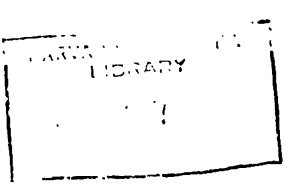

WOMEN AND THE ALPHABET

A Series of Essays

BY

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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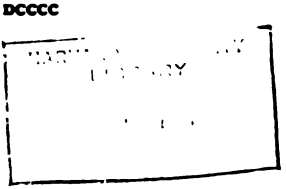

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE first essay in this volume, "Ought Women to learn the Alphabet?" appeared originally in the "Atlantic Monthly" of February, 1859, and has since been reprinted in various forms, bearing its share, I trust, in the great development of more liberal views in respect to the training and duties of women which has made itself manifest within forty years. There was, for instance, a report that it was the perusal of this essay which led the late Miss Sophia Smith to the founding of the women's college bearing her name at Northampton, Massachusetts.

The remaining papers in the volume formed originally a part of a book entitled "Common Sense About Women" which was made up largely of papers from the "Woman's Journal." This book was first published in 1881 and was reprinted in somewhat abridged form some years later in London (Sonnenschein). It must have attained a considerable circulation there, as the fourth (stereotyped) edition appeared in 1897. From this London reprint a German

translation was made by Fräulein Eugenie Jacobi, under the title "Die Frauenfrage und der gesunde Menschenverstand" (Schupp: Neuwied and Leipzig, 1895).

T. W. H.

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WOMEN AND THE ALPHABET

I

OUGHT WOMEN TO LEARN THE ALPHABET?

PARIS smiled, for an hour or two, in the year 1801, when, amidst Napoleon's mighty projects for remodelling the religion and government of his empire, the ironical satirist, Sylvain Maréchal, thrust in his "Plan for a Law prohibiting the Alphabet to Women."[1] Daring, keen, sarcastic, learned, the little tract retains to-day so much of its pungency, that we can hardly wonder at the honest simplicity of the author's friend and biographer, Madame Gacon Dufour, who declared that he must be insane, and soberly replied to him.

His proposed statute consists of eighty-two clauses, and is fortified by a "whereas" of a hundred and thirteen weighty reasons. He exhausts the range of history to show the frightful results which have followed this taste of

[1] *Projet d'une loi portant défense d'apprendre à lire aux femmes.*

fruit of the tree of knowledge; quotes from the Encyclopédie, to prove that the woman who knows the alphabet has already lost a portion of her innocence; cites the opinion of Molière, that any female who has unhappily learned anything in this line should affect ignorance, when possible; asserts that knowledge rarely makes men attractive, and females never; opines that women have no occasion to peruse Ovid's "Art of Love," since they know it all in advance; remarks that three quarters of female authors are no better than they should be; maintains that Madame Guion would have been far more useful had she been merely pretty and an ignoramus, such as Nature made her, — that Ruth and Naomi could not read, and Boaz probably would never have married into the family had they possessed that accomplishment, — that the Spartan women did not know the alphabet, nor the Amazons, nor Penelope, nor Andromache, nor Lucretia, nor Joan of Arc, nor Petrarch's Laura, nor the daughters of Charlemagne, nor the three hundred and sixty-five wives of Mohammed; but that Sappho and Madame de Maintenon could read altogether too well; while the case of Saint Brigitta, who brought forth twelve children and twelve books, was clearly exceptional, and afforded no safe precedent.

It would seem that the brilliant Frenchman

touched the root of the matter. Ought women to learn the alphabet? There the whole question lies. Concede this little fulcrum, and Archimedea will move the world before she has done with it: it becomes merely a question of time. Resistance must be made here or nowhere. *Obsta principiis.* Woman must be a subject or an equal: there is no middle ground. What if the Chinese proverb should turn out to be, after all, the summit of wisdom, "For men, to cultivate virtue is knowledge; for women, to renounce knowledge is virtue"?

No doubt, the progress of events is slow, like the working of the laws of gravitation generally. Certainly there has been but little change in the legal position of women since China was in its prime, until within the last half century. Lawyers admit that the fundamental theory of English and Oriental law is the same on this point: Man and wife are one, and that one is the husband. It is the oldest of legal traditions. When Blackstone declares that "the very being and existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage," and American Kent echoes that "her legal existence and authority are in a manner lost;" when Petersdorff asserts that "the husband has the right of imposing such corporeal restraints as he may deem necessary," and Bacon that "the husband hath, by law, power and

dominion over his wife, and may keep her by force within the bounds of duty, and may beat her, but not in a violent or cruel manner;" when Mr. Justice Coleridge rules that the husband, in certain cases, "has a right to confine his wife in his own dwelling-house, and restrain her from liberty for an indefinite time," and Baron Alderson sums it all up tersely, "The wife is only the *servant* of her husband," — these high authorities simply reaffirm the dogma of the Gentoo code, four thousand years old and more: "A man, both day and night, must keep his wife so much in subjection that she by no means be mistress of her own actions. If the wife have her own free will, notwithstanding she be of a superior caste, she will behave amiss."

Yet behind these unchanging institutions, a pressure has been for centuries becoming concentrated, which, now that it has begun to act, is threatening to overthrow them all. It has not yet operated very visibly in the Old World, where, even in England, the majority of women have not till lately mastered the alphabet sufficiently to sign their own names in the marriage register. But in this country the vast changes of the last few years are already a matter of history. No trumpet has been sounded, no earthquake has been felt, while State after State has ushered into legal existence one half of the popu-

lation within its borders. Surely, here and now, might poor M. Maréchal exclaim, the bitter fruits of the original seed appear. The sad question recurs, Whether women ought ever to have tasted of the alphabet.

It is true that Eve ruined us all, according to theology, without knowing her letters. Still there is something to be said in defence of that venerable ancestress. The Veronese lady, Isotta Nogarola, five hundred and thirty-six of whose learned epistles were preserved by De Thou, composed a dialogue on the question, Whether Adam or Eve had committed the greater sin. But Ludovico Domenichi, in his "Dialogue on the Nobleness of Women," maintains that Eve did not sin at all, because she was not even created when Adam was told not to eat the apple. It was "in Adam all died," he shrewdly says; nobody died in Eve: which looks plausible. Be that as it may, Eve's daughters are in danger of swallowing a whole harvest of forbidden fruit, in these revolutionary days, unless something be done to cut off the supply.

It has been seriously asserted, that during the last half century more books have been written by women and about women than during all the previous uncounted ages. It may be true; although, when we think of the innu-

merable volumes of *Mémoires* by French women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, — each justifying the existence of her own ten volumes by the remark, that all her contemporaries were writing as many, — we have our doubts. As to the increased multitude of general treatises on the female sex, however, — its education, life, health, diseases, charms, dress, deeds, sphere, rights, wrongs, work, wages, encroachments, and idiosyncrasies generally, — there can be no doubt whatever; and the poorest of these books recognizes a condition of public sentiment of which no other age ever dreamed.

Still, literary history preserves the names of some reformers before the Reformation, in this matter. There was Signora Moderata Fonte, the Venetian, who left a book to be published after her death, in 1592, "Dei Meriti delle Donne." There was her townswoman, Lucrezia Marinella, who followed, ten years after, with her essay, "La Nobilità e la Eccelenza delle Donne, con Difetti e Mancamenti degli Uomini," — a comprehensive theme, truly! Then followed the all-accomplished Anna Maria Schurman, in 1645, with her "Dissertatio de Ingenii Muliebris ad Doctrinam et meliores Literas Aptitudine," with a few miscellaneous letters appended in Greek and Hebrew. At

last came boldly Jacquette Guillaume, in 1665, and threw down the gauntlet in her title-page, "Les Dames Illustres; où par bonnes et fortes Raisons il se prouve que le Sexe Feminin surpasse en toute Sorte de Genre le Sexe Masculin;" and with her came Margaret Boufflet and a host of others; and finally, in England, Mary Wollstonecraft, whose famous book, formidable in its day, would seem rather conservative now; and in America, that pious and worthy dame, Mrs. H. Mather Crocker, Cotton Mather's grandchild, who, in 1848, published the first book on the "Rights of Woman" ever written on this side the Atlantic.

Meanwhile there have never been wanting men, and strong men, to echo these appeals. From Cornelius Agrippa and his essay (1509) on the excellence of woman and her preëminence over man, down to the first youthful thesis of Agassiz, "Mens Feminæ Viri Animo superior," there has been a succession of voices crying in the wilderness. In England, Anthony Gibson wrote a book, in 1599, called "A Woman's Woorth, defended against all the Men in the World, proving them to be more Perfect, Excellent, and Absolute in all Vertuous Actions than any Man of what Qualitie soever, *Interlarded with Poetry*." *Per contra*, the learned Acidalius published a book in Latin, and after-

wards in French, to prove that women are not reasonable creatures. Modern theologians are at worst merely sub-acid, and do not always say so, if they think so. Meanwhile most persons have been content to leave the world to go on its old course, in this matter as in others, and have thus acquiesced in that stern judicial decree with which Timon of Athens sums up all his curses upon womankind, — "If there sit twelve women at the table, let a dozen of them be — as they are."

Ancient or modern, nothing in any of these discussions is so valuable as the fact of the discussion itself. There is no discussion where there is no wrong. Nothing so indicates wrong as this morbid self-inspection. The complaints are a perpetual protest, the defences a perpetual confession. It is too late to ignore the question; and, once opened, it can be settled only on absolute and permanent principles. There is a wrong; but where? Does woman already know too much, or too little? Was she created for man's subject, or his equal? Shall she have the alphabet, or not?

Ancient mythology, which undertook to explain everything, easily accounted for the social and political disabilities of woman. Goguet quotes the story from Saint Augustine, who got it from Varro. Cecrops, building Athens, saw

starting from the earth an olive-plant and a fountain, side by side. The Delphic oracle said that this indicated a strife between Minerva and Neptune for the honor of giving a name to the city, and that the people must decide between them. Cecrops thereupon assembled the men, and the women also, who then had a right to vote; and the result was that Minerva carried the election by a glorious majority of one. Then Attica was overflowed and laid waste: of course the citizens attributed the calamity to Neptune, and resolved to punish the women. It was therefore determined that in future they should not vote, nor should any child bear the name of its mother.

Thus easily did mythology explain all troublesome inconsistencies; but it is much that it should even have recognized them as needing explanation. The real solution is, however, more simple. The obstacle to the woman's sharing the alphabet, or indeed any other privilege, has been thought by some to be the fear of impairing her delicacy, or of destroying her domesticity, or of confounding the distinction between the sexes. These may have been plausible excuses. They have even been genuine, though minor, anxieties. But the whole thing, I take it, had always one simple, intelligible basis, — sheer contempt for the supposed

intellectual inferiority of woman. She was not to be taught, because she was not worth teaching. The learned Acidalius aforesaid was in the majority. According to Aristotle and the Peripatetics, woman was *animal occasionatum*, as if a sort of monster and accidental production. Mediæval councils, charitably asserting her claims to the rank of humanity, still pronounced her unfit for instruction. In the Hindoo dramas she did not even speak the same language with her master, but used the dialect of slaves. When, in the sixteenth century, Françoise de Saintonges wished to establish girls' schools in France, she was hooted in the streets; and her father called together four doctors, learned in the law, to decide whether she was not possessed by demons, to think of educating women, — *pour s'assurer qu'instruire des femmes n'était pas un œuvre du démon.*

It was the same with political rights. The foundation of the Salic Law was not any sentimental anxiety to guard female delicacy and domesticity; it was, as stated by Froissart, a blunt, hearty contempt: "The kingdom of France being too noble to be ruled by a woman." And the same principle was reaffirmed for our own institutions, in rather softened language, by Theophilus Parsons, in his famous defence of the rights of Massachusetts men

(the "Essex Result," in 1778): "Women, what age soever they are of, are not considered as having a sufficient acquired discretion [to exercise the franchise]."

In harmony with this are the various maxims and *bon-mots* of eminent men, in respect to women. Niebuhr thought he should not have educated a girl well, — he should have made her know too much. Lessing said, "The woman who thinks is like the man who puts on rouge, ridiculous." Voltaire said, "Ideas are like beards: women and young men have none." And witty Dr. Maginn carries to its extreme the atrocity, "We like to hear a few words of sense from a woman, as we do from a parrot, because they are so unexpected." Yet how can we wonder at these opinions, when the saints have been severer than the sages? — since the pious Fénelon taught that true virgin delicacy was almost as incompatible with learning as with vice; and Dr. Channing complained, in his "Essay on Exclusion and Denunciation," of "women forgetting the tenderness of their sex," and arguing on theology.

Now this impression of feminine inferiority may be right or wrong, but it obviously does a good deal towards explaining the facts it assumes. If contempt does not originally cause failure, it perpetuates it. Systematically dis-

courage any individual, or class, from birth to death, and they learn, in nine cases out of ten, to acquiesce in their degradation, if not to claim it as a crown of glory. If the Abbé Choisi praised the Duchesse de Fontanges for being "beautiful as an angel and silly as a goose," it was natural that all the young ladies of the court should resolve to make up in folly what they wanted in charms. All generations of women having been bred under the shadow of intellectual contempt, they have, of course, done much to justify it. They have often used only for frivolous purposes even the poor opportunities allowed them. They have employed the alphabet, as Molière said, chiefly in spelling the verb *Amo*. Their use of science has been like that of Mlle. de Launay, who computed the decline in her lover's affection by his abbreviation of their evening walk in the public square, preferring to cross it rather than take the circuit; "from which I inferred," she says, "that his passion had diminished in the ratio between the diagonal of a rectangular parallelogram and the sum of two adjacent sides." And their conception, even of art, has been too often on the scale of Properzia de Rossi, who carved sixty-five heads on a walnut, the smallest of all recorded symbols of woman's sphere.

All this might, perhaps, be overcome, if the

social prejudice which discourages women would only reward proportionately those who surmount the discouragement. The more obstacles, the more glory, if society would only pay in proportion to the labor; but it does not. Women being denied, not merely the training which prepares for great deeds, but the praise and compensation which follow them, have been weakened in both directions. The career of eminent men ordinarily begins with college and the memories of Miltiades, and ends with fortune and fame: woman begins under discouragement, and ends beneath the same. Single, she works with half preparation and half pay; married, she puts name and wages into the keeping of her husband, shrinks into John Smith's "lady" during life, and John Smith's "relict" on her tombstone; and still the world wonders that her deeds, like her opportunities, are inferior.

Evidently, then, the advocates of woman's claims — those who hold that "the virtues of the man and the woman are the same," with Antisthenes, or that "the talent of the man and the woman is the same," with Socrates in Xenophon's "Banquet" — must be cautious lest they attempt to prove too much. Of course, if women know as much as the men, without schools and colleges, there is no need of admit-

ting them to those institutions. If they work as well on half pay, it diminishes the inducement to give them the other half. The safer position is, to claim that they have done just enough to show what they might have done under circumstances less discouraging. Take, for instance, the common remark, that women have invented nothing. It is a valid answer, that the only implements habitually used by woman have been the needle, the spindle, and the basket; and tradition reports that she herself invented all three. In the same way it may be shown that the departments in which women have equalled men have been the departments in which they have had equal training, equal encouragement, and equal compensation; as, for instance, the theatre. Madame Lagrange, the *prima donna*, after years of costly musical instruction, wins the zenith of professional success; she receives, the newspapers affirm, sixty thousand dollars a year, travelling expenses for ten persons, country-houses, stables, and liveries, besides an uncounted revenue of bracelets, bouquets, and *billets-doux*. Of course, every young *débutante* fancies the same thing within her own reach, with only a brief stage-vista between. On the stage there is no deduction for sex, and, therefore, woman has shown in that sphere an equal genius. But every female com-

mon-school teacher in the United States finds the enjoyment of her four hundred dollars a year to be secretly embittered by the knowledge that the young college stripling in the next schoolroom is paid twice that sum for work no harder or more responsible than her own, and that, too, after the whole pathway of education has been obstructed for her, and smoothed for him. These may be gross and carnal considerations; but Faith asks her daily bread, and fancy must be fed. We deny woman her fair share of training, of encouragement, of remuneration, and then talk fine nonsense about her instincts and intuitions. We say sentimentally with the Oriental proverbialist, "Every book of knowledge is implanted by nature in the heart of woman," — and make the compliment a substitute for the alphabet.

Nothing can be more absurd than to impose entirely distinct standards, in this respect, on the two sexes, or to expect that woman, any more than man, will accomplish anything great without due preparation and adequate stimulus. Mrs. Patten, who navigated her husband's ship from Cape Horn to California, would have failed in the effort, for all her heroism, if she had not, unlike most of her sex, been taught to use her Bowditch's "Navigator." Florence Nightingale, when she heard of the distresses in the

Crimea, did not, as most people imagine, rise up and say, "I am a woman, ignorant but intuitive, with very little sense and information, but exceedingly sublime aspirations; my strength lies in my weakness; I can do all things without knowing anything about them." Not at all: during ten years she had been in hard training for precisely such services; had visited all the hospitals in London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Paris, Lyons, Rome, Brussels, and Berlin; had studied under the Sisters of Charity, and been twice a nurse in the Protestant Institution at Kaiserswerth. Therefore she did not merely carry to the Crimea a woman's heart, as her stock in trade, but she knew the alphabet of her profession better than the men around her. Of course, genius and enthusiasm are, for both sexes, elements unforeseen and incalculable; but, as a general rule, great achievements imply great preparations and favorable conditions.

To disregard this truth is unreasonable in the abstract, and cruel in its consequences. If an extraordinary male gymnast can clear a height of ten feet with the aid of a spring-board, it would be considered slightly absurd to ask a woman to leap eleven feet without one; yet this is precisely what society and the critics have always done. Training and wages and social approbation are very elastic spring-

boards; and the whole course of history has seen these offered bounteously to one sex, and as sedulously withheld from the other. Let woman consent to be a doll, and there was no finery so gorgeous, no baby-house so costly, but she might aspire to share its lavish delights; let her ask simply for an equal chance to learn, to labor, and to live, and it was as if that same doll should open its lips, and propound Euclid's forty-seventh proposition. While we have all deplored the helpless position of indigent women, and lamented that they had no alternative beyond the needle, the wash-tub, the school-room, and the street, we have usually resisted their admission into every new occupation, denied them training, and cut their compensation down. Like Charles Lamb, who atoned for coming late to the office in the morning by going away early in the afternoon, we have, first, half educated women, and then, to restore the balance, only half paid them. What innumerable obstacles have been placed in their way as female physicians; what a complication of difficulties has been encountered by them, even as printers, engravers, and designers! In London, Mr. Bennett was once mobbed for lecturing to women on watchmaking. In this country, we have known grave professors refuse to address lyceums which thought fit to employ

an occasional female lecturer. Mr. Comer stated that it was "in the face of ridicule and sneers" that he began to educate American women as bookkeepers many years ago; and it was a little contemptible in Miss Muloch to revive the same satire in "A Woman's Thoughts on Women," when she must have known that in half the retail shops in Paris her own sex rules the ledger, and Mammon knows no Salic law.

We find, on investigation, what these considerations would lead us to expect, that eminent women have commonly been exceptional in training and position, as well as in their genius. They have excelled the average of their own sex because they have shared the ordinary advantages of the other sex. Take any department of learning or skill; take, for instance, the knowledge of languages, the universal alphabet, philology. On the great stairway at Padua stands the statue of Elena Cornaro, professor of six languages in that once renowned university. But Elena Cornaro was educated like a boy, by her father. On the great door of the University of Bologna is inscribed the epitaph of Clotilda Tambroni, the honored correspondent of Porson, and the first Greek scholar of southern Europe in her day. But Clotilda Tambroni was educated like a boy, by

Emanuele Aponte. How fine are those prefatory words, "by a Right Reverend Prelate," to that pioneer book in Anglo-Saxon lore, Elizabeth Elstob's grammar: "Our earthly possessions are indeed our patrimony, as derived to us by the industry of our fathers; but the language in which we speak is our mother tongue, and who so proper to play the critic in this as the females?" Yet this particular female obtained the rudiments of her rare education from her mother, before she was eight years old, in spite of much opposition from her right reverend guardians. Adelung declares that all modern philology is founded on the translation of a Russian vocabulary into two hundred different dialects by Catherine II. But Catherine shared, in childhood, the instructors of her brother, Prince Frederick, and was subject to some reproach for learning, though a girl, so much more rapidly than he did. Christina of Sweden ironically reproved Madame Dacier for her translation of Callimachus: "Such a pretty girl as you are, are you not ashamed to be so learned?" But Madame Dacier acquired Greek by contriving to do her embroidery in the room where her father was teaching her stupid brother; and her queenly critic had herself learned to read Thucydides, harder Greek than Callimachus, before she was four-

teen. And so down to our own day, who knows how many mute, inglorious Minervas may have perished unenlightened, while Margaret Fuller Ossoli and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were being educated "like boys."

This expression simply means that they had the most solid training which the times afforded. Most persons would instantly take alarm at the very words; that is, they have so little faith in the distinctions which Nature has established, that they think, if you teach the alphabet, or anything else, indiscriminately to both sexes, you annul all difference between them. The common reasoning is thus: "Boys and girls are acknowledged to be very unlike. Now, boys study Greek and algebra, medicine and bookkeeping. Therefore girls should not." As if one should say: "Boys and girls are very unlike. Now, boys eat beef and potatoes. Therefore, obviously, girls should not."

The analogy between physical and spiritual food is precisely in point. The simple truth is, that, amid the vast range of human powers and properties, the fact of sex is but one item. Vital and momentous in itself, it does not constitute the whole organism, but only a part. The distinction of male and female is special, aimed at a certain end; and, apart from that end, it is, throughout all the kingdoms of Na-

ture, of minor importance. With but trifling exceptions, from infusoria up to man, the female animal moves, breathes, looks, listens, runs, flies, swims, pursues its food, eats it, digests it, in precisely the same manner as the male: all instincts, all characteristics, are the same, except as to the one solitary fact of parentage. Mr. Ten Broeck's race-horses, Pryor and Prioress, were foaled alike, fed alike, trained alike, and finally ran side by side, competing for the same prize. The eagle is not checked in soaring by any consciousness of sex, nor asks the sex of the timid hare, its quarry. Nature, for high purposes, creates and guards the sexual distinction, but keeps it subordinate to those still more important.

Now all this bears directly upon the alphabet. What sort of philosophy is that which says, "John is a fool; Jane is a genius: nevertheless, John, being a man, shall learn, lead, make laws, make money; Jane, being a woman, shall be ignorant, dependent, disfranchised, underpaid"? Of course, the time is past when one would state this so frankly, though Comte comes quite near it, to say nothing of the Mormons; but this formula really lies at the bottom of the reasoning one hears every day. The answer is, Soul before sex. Give an equal chance, and let genius and industry do the rest. *La car-*

rière ouverte aux talens! Every man for himself, every woman for herself, and the alphabet for us all.

Thus far, my whole course of argument has been defensive and explanatory. I have shown that woman's inferiority in special achievements, so far as it exists, is a fact of small importance, because it is merely a corollary from her historic position of degradation. She has not excelled, because she has had no fair chance to excel. Man, placing his foot upon her shoulder, has taunted her with not rising. But the ulterior question remains behind. How came she into this attitude originally? Explain the explanation, the logician fairly demands. Granted that woman is weak because she has been systematically degraded: but why was she degraded? This is a far deeper question, — one to be met only by a profounder philosophy and a positive solution. We are coming on ground almost wholly untrod, and must do the best we can.

I venture to assert, then, that woman's social inferiority has been, to a great extent, in the past a legitimate thing. To all appearance, history would have been impossible without it, just as it would have been impossible without an epoch of war and slavery. It is simply a matter of social progress, — a part of the succession of civilizations. The past has been

inevitably a period of ignorance, of engrossing physical necessities, and of brute force, — not of freedom, of philanthropy, and of culture. During that lower epoch, woman was necessarily an inferior, degraded by abject labor, even in time of peace, — degraded uniformly by war, chivalry to the contrary notwithstanding. Behind all the courtesies of Amadis and the Cid lay the stern fact, — woman a child or a toy. The flattering troubadours chanted her into a poet's paradise; but alas! that kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent took it by force. The truth simply was, that her time had not come. Physical strength must rule for a time, and she was the weaker. She was very properly refused a feudal grant, by reason, say "Les Coustumes de Normandie," of her unfitness for war or policy: *C'est l'homme ki se bast et ki conseille.* Other authorities put it still more plainly: "A woman cannot serve the emperor or feudal lord in war, on account of the decorum of her sex; nor assist him with advice, because of her limited intellect; nor keep his counsel, owing to the infirmity of her disposition." All which was, no doubt, in the majority of cases, true; and the degradation of woman was simply a part of a system which has, indeed, had its day, but has bequeathed its associations.

From this reign of force, woman never freed herself by force. She could not fight, or would not. Bohemian annals, to be sure, record the legend of a literal war between the sexes, in which the women's army was led by Libussa and Wlasla, and which finally ended with the capture, by the army of men, of Castle Dziewin, Maiden's Tower, whose ruins are still visible near Prague. The armor of Libussa is still shown at Vienna; and the guide calls attention to the long-peaked toes of steel, with which, he avers, the tender princess was wont to pierce the hearts of her opponents, while careering through the battle. And there are abundant instances in which women have fought side by side with men, and on equal terms. The ancient British women mingled in the wars of their husbands, and their princesses were trained to the use of arms in the Maiden's Castle at Edinburgh, in the Isle of Skye. The Moorish wives and maidens fought in defence of their European peninsula; and the Portuguese women fought on the same soil, against the armies of Philip II. The king of Siam has, at present, a body-guard of four hundred women: they are armed with lance and rifle, are admirably disciplined, and their commander (appointed after saving the king's life at a tiger-hunt) ranks as one of the royal family, and has ten elephants

at her service. When the all-conquering Dahomian army marched upon Abbeokuta, in 1851, they numbered ten thousand men and six thousand women. The women were, as usual, placed foremost in the assault, as being most reliable; and of the eighteen hundred bodies left dead before the walls, the vast majority were of women. The Hospital of the Invalides, in Paris, has sheltered, for half a century, a fine specimen of a female soldier, "Lieutenant Madame Bulan," who lived to be more than eighty years old, had been decorated by Napoleon's own hand with the cross of the Legion of Honor, and was credited on the hospital books with "seven years' service, seven campaigns, three wounds, several times distinguished, especially in Corsica, in defending a fort against the English." But these cases, though interesting to the historian, are still exceptional; and the instinctive repugnance they inspire is a condemnation, not of women, but of war.

The reason, then, for the long subjection of woman has been simply that humanity was passing through its first epoch, and her full career was to be reserved for the second. As the different races of man have appeared successively upon the stage of history, so there has been an order of succession of the sexes. Woman's appointed era, like that of the Teu-

tonic races, was delayed, but not omitted. It is not merely true that the empire of the past has belonged to man, but that it has properly belonged to him; for it was an empire of the muscles, enlisting, at best, but the lower powers of the understanding. There can be no question that the present epoch is initiating an empire of the higher reason, of arts, affections, aspirations; and for that epoch the genius of woman has been reserved. The spirit of the age has always kept pace with the facts, and outstripped the statutes. Till the fulness of time came, woman was necessarily kept a slave to the spinning-wheel and the needle; now higher work is ready; peace has brought invention to her aid, and the mechanical means for her emancipation are ready also. No use in releasing her till man, with his strong arm, had worked out his preliminary share in civilization. "Earth waits for her queen" was a favorite motto of Margaret Fuller Ossoli; but it would be more correct to say that the queen has waited for her earth, till it could be smoothed and prepared for her occupancy. Now Cinderella may begin to think of putting on her royal robes.

Everybody sees that the times are altering the whole material position of woman; but most people do not appear to see the inevitable

social and moral changes which are also involved. As has been already said, the woman of ancient history was a slave to physical necessities, both in war and peace. In war she could do too little; in peace she did too much, under the material compulsions which controlled the world. How could the Jews, for instance, elevate woman? They could not spare her from the wool and the flax, and the candle that goeth not out by night. In Rome, when the bride first stepped across her threshold, they did not ask her, Do you know the alphabet? they asked simply, Can you spin? There was no higher epitaph than Queen Amalasontha's, — *Domum servavit, lanam fecit.* In Bœotia, brides were conducted home in vehicles whose wheels were burned at the door, in token that they were never to leave the house again. Pythagoras instituted at Crotona an annual festival for the distaff; Confucius, in China, did the same for the spindle; and these celebrated not the freedom, but the serfdom, of woman.

And even into modern days this same tyrannical necessity has lingered. "Go spin, you jades! go spin!" was the only answer vouchsafed by the Earl of Pembroke to the twice-banished nuns of Wilton. Even now, travellers agree that throughout civilized Europe, with the partial exception of England and France,

the profound absorption of the mass of women in household labors renders their general elevation impossible. But with us Americans, and in this age, when all these vast labors are being more and more transferred to arms of brass and iron; when Rochester grinds the flour and Lowell weaves the cloth, and the fire on the hearth has gone into black retirement and mourning; when the wiser a virgin is, the less she has to do with oil in her lamp; when the needle has made its last dying speech and confession in the "Song of the Shirt," and the sewing-machine has changed those doleful marches to delightful measures, — how is it possible for the blindest to help seeing that a new era is begun, and that the time has come for woman to learn the alphabet?

Nobody asks for any abolition of domestic labor for women, any more than of outdoor labor for men. Of course, most women will still continue to be mainly occupied with the indoor care of their families, and most men with their external support. All that is desirable for either sex is such an economy of labor, in this respect, as shall leave some spare time to be appropriated in other directions. The argument against each new emancipation of woman is precisely that always made against the liberation of serfs and the enfranchisement of plebe-

ians, — that the new position will take them from their legitimate business. "How can he [or she] get wisdom that holdeth the plough [or the broom], — whose talk is of bullocks [or of babies]?" Yet the American farmer has already emancipated himself from these fancied incompatibilities; and so will the farmer's wife. In a nation where there is no leisure class and no peasantry, this whole theory of exclusion is an absurdity. We all have a little leisure, and we must all make the most of it. If we will confine large interests and duties to those who have nothing else to do, we must go back to monarchy at once. If otherwise, then the alphabet, and its consequences, must be open to woman as to man. Jean Paul says nobly, in his "Levana," that, "before and after being a mother, a woman is a human being, and neither maternal nor conjugal relation can supersede the human responsibility, but must become its means and instrument." And it is good to read the manly speech, on this subject, of John Quincy Adams, quoted at length in Quincy's life of him, in which, after fully defending the political petitions of the women of Plymouth, he declares that "the correct principle is that women are not only justified, but exhibit the most exalted virtue, when they do depart from the domestic circle, and enter on the concerns

of their country, of humanity, and of their God."

There are duties devolving on every human being, — duties not small nor few, but vast and varied, — which spring from home and private life, and all their sweet relations. The support or care of the humblest household is a function worthy of men, women, and angels, so far as it goes. From these duties none must shrink, neither man nor woman; the loftiest genius cannot ignore them; the sublimest charity must begin with them. They are their own exceeding great reward; their self-sacrifice is infinite joy; and the selfishness which discards them is repaid by loneliness and a desolate old age. Yet these, though the most tender and intimate portion of human life, do not form its whole. It is given to noble souls to crave other interests also, added spheres, not necessarily alien from these; larger knowledge, larger action also; duties, responsibilities, anxieties, dangers, all the aliment that history has given to its heroes. Not home less, but humanity more. When the high-born English lady in the Crimean hospital, ordered to a post of almost certain death, only raised her hands to heaven, and said, "Thank God!" she did not renounce her true position as woman: she claimed it. When the queen of James I. of Scotland, already

immortalized by him in stately verse, won a higher immortality by welcoming to her fair bosom the dagger aimed at his; when the Countess of Buchan hung confined in her iron cage, outside Berwick Castle, in penalty for crowning Robert the Bruce; when the stainless soul of Joan of Arc met God, like Moses, in a burning flame, — these things were as they should be. Man must not monopolize these privileges of peril, the birthright of great souls. Serenades and compliments must not replace the nobler hospitality which shares with woman the opportunity of martyrdom. Great administrative duties also, cares of state, for which one should be born gray-headed, how nobly do these sit upon a woman's brow! Each year adds to the storied renown of Elizabeth of England, greatest sovereign of the greatest of historic nations. Christina of Sweden, alone among the crowned heads of Europe (so says Voltaire), sustained the dignity of the throne against Richelieu and Mazarin. And these queens most assuredly did not sacrifice their womanhood in the process; for her Britannic Majesty's wardrobe included four thousand gowns; and Mlle. de Montpensier declares that when Christina had put on a wig of the latest fashion, "she really looked extremely pretty."

Les races se féminisent, said Buffon, — "The

world is growing more feminine." It is a compliment, whether the naturalist intended it or not. Time has brought peace; peace, invention; and the poorest woman of to-day is born to an inheritance of which her ancestors never dreamed. Previous attempts to confer on women social and political equality, — as when Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, made them magistrates; or when the Hungarian revolutionists made them voters; or when our own New Jersey tried the same experiment in a guarded fashion in early times, and then revoked the privilege, because (as in the ancient fable) the women voted the wrong way; — these things were premature, and valuable only as recognitions of a principle. But in view of the rapid changes now going on, he is a rash man who asserts the "Woman Question" to be anything but a mere question of time. The fulcrum has been already given in the alphabet, and we must simply watch, and see whether the earth does not move.

There is the plain fact: woman must be either a subject or an equal; there is no middle ground. Every concession to a supposed principle only involves the necessity of the next concession for which that principle calls. Once yield the alphabet, and we abandon the whole long theory of subjection and coverture: tradi-

tion is set aside, and we have nothing but reason to fall back upon. Reasoning abstractly, it must be admitted that the argument has been, thus far, entirely on the women's side, inasmuch as no man has yet seriously tried to meet them with argument. It is an alarming feature of this discussion, that it has reversed, very generally, the traditional positions of the sexes: the women have had all the logic; and the most intelligent men, when they have attempted the other side, have limited themselves to satire and gossip. What rational woman can be really convinced by the nonsense which is talked in ordinary society around her, — as, that it is right to admit girls to common schools, and equally right to exclude them from colleges; that it is proper for a woman to sing in public, but indelicate for her to speak in public; that a post-office box is an unexceptionable place to drop a bit of paper into, but a ballot-box terribly dangerous? No cause in the world can keep above water, sustained by such contradictions as these, too feeble and slight to be dignified by the name of fallacies. Some persons profess to think it impossible to reason with a woman, and such critics certainly show no disposition to try the experiment.

But we must remember that all our American institutions are based on consistency, or on no-

thing: all claim to be founded on the principles of natural right; and when they quit those, they are lost. In all European monarchies it is the theory that the mass of the people are children to be governed, not mature beings to govern themselves; this is clearly stated and consistently applied. In the United States we have formally abandoned this theory for one half of the human race, while for the other half it flourishes with little change. The moment the claims of woman are broached, the democrat becomes a monarchist. What Americans commonly criticise in English statesmen, namely, that they habitually evade all arguments based on natural right, and defend every legal wrong on the ground that it works well in practice, is the precise defect in our habitual view of woman. The perplexity must be resolved somehow. Most men admit that a strict adherence to our own principles would place both sexes in precisely equal positions before law and constitution, as well as in school and society. But each has his special quibble to apply, showing that in this case we must abandon all the general maxims to which we have pledged ourselves, and hold only by precedent. Nay, he construes even precedent with the most ingenious rigor; since the exclusion of women from all direct contact with affairs can be made far

more perfect in a republic than is possible in a monarchy, where even sex is merged in rank, and the female patrician may have far more power than the male plebeian. But, as matters now stand among us, there is no aristocracy but of sex: all men are born patrician, all women are legally plebeian; all men are equal in having political power, and all women in having none. This is a paradox so evident, and such an anomaly in human progress, that it cannot last forever, without new discoveries in logic, or else a deliberate return to M. Maréchal's theory concerning the alphabet.

Meanwhile, as the newspapers say, we anxiously await further developments. According to present appearances, the final adjustment lies mainly in the hands of women themselves. Men can hardly be expected to concede either rights or privileges more rapidly than they are claimed, or to be truer to women than women are to each other. In fact, the worst effect of a condition of inferiority is the weakness it leaves behind; even when we say, "Hands off!" the sufferer does not rise. In such a case, there is but one counsel worth giving. More depends on determination than even on ability. Will, not talent, governs the world. Who believed that a poetess could ever be more than an Annot Lyle of the harp, to soothe with sweet melo-

dies the leisure of her lord, until in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's hands the thing became a trumpet? Where are gone the sneers with which army surgeons and parliamentary orators opposed Mr. Sidney Herbert's first proposition to send Florence Nightingale to the Crimea? In how many towns was the current of popular prejudice against female orators reversed by one winning speech from Lucy Stone! Where no logic can prevail, success silences. First give woman, if you dare, the alphabet, then summon her to her career: and though men, ignorant and prejudiced, may oppose its beginnings, they will at last fling around her conquering footsteps more lavish praises than ever greeted the opera's idol, — more perfumed flowers than ever wooed, with intoxicating fragrance, the fairest butterfly of the ball-room.

II

PHYSIOLOGY

"Allein, bevor und nachdem man Mutter ist, ist Man ein Mensch; die mütterliche Bestimmung aber, oder gar die heeliche, kann nicht die menschliche überwiegen oder ersetzen, sondern sie muss das Mittel, nicht der Zweck derselben sein." —J. P. F. RICHTER: Levana, § 89.

"But, before and after being a mother, one is a human being; and neither the motherly nor the wifely destination can overbalance or replace the human, but must become its means, not its end."

TOO MUCH NATURAL HISTORY

Lord Melbourne, speaking of the fine ladies in London who were fond of talking about their ailments, used to complain that they gave him too much of their natural history. There are a good many writers — usually men — who, with the best intentions, discuss woman as if she had merely a physical organization, and as if she existed only for one object, the production and rearing of children. Against this some protest may well be made.

Doubtless there are few things more important to a community than the health of its women. The Sandwich Island proverb says: —

"If strong is the frame of the mother,
The son will give laws to the people."

And, in nations where all men give laws, all men need mothers of strong frames.

Moreover, there is no harm in admitting that all the rules of our structure are imperative; that soul and body, whether of man or woman, are made in harmony, so that each part of our nature must accept the limitations of the other. A man's soul may yearn to the stars; but so long as the body cannot jump so high, he must accept the body's veto. It is the same with any veto interposed in advance by the physical structure of woman. Nobody objects to this general principle. It is only when clerical gentlemen or physiological gentlemen undertake to go a step farther, and put in that veto on their own responsibility, that it is necessary to say, "Hands off, gentlemen! Precisely because women are women, they, not you, are to settle that question."

One or two points are clear. Every specialist is liable to overrate his own specialty; and the man who thinks of woman only as a wife and mother is apt to forget, that, before she was either of these, she was a human being. "Women, as such," says an able writer, "are constituted for purposes of maternity and the continuation of mankind." Undoubtedly, and

so were men, as such, constituted for paternity. But very much depends on what relative importance we assign to the phrase, "as such." Even an essay so careful, so moderate, and so free from coarseness, as that here quoted, suggests, after all, a slight one-sidedness, — perhaps a natural reaction from the one-sidedness of those injudicious reformers who allow themselves to speak slightingly of "the merely animal function of child-bearing." Higher than either — wiser than both put together — is that noble statement with which Jean Paul begins his fine essay on the education of girls in "Levana." "Before being a wife or mother, one is a human being; and neither motherly nor wifely destination can overbalance or replace the human, but must become its means, not end. As above the poet, the painter, or the hero, so above the mother, does the human being rise preëminent."

Here is sure anchorage. We can hold to this. And, fortunately, all the analogies of nature sustain this position. Throughout nature the laws of sex rule everywhere; but they rule a kingdom of their own, always subordinate to the greater kingdom of the vital functions. Every creature, male or female, finds in its sexual relations only a subordinate part of its existence. The need of food, the need of exer-

cise, the joy of living, these come first, and absorb the bulk of its life, whether the individual be male or female. This *Antiope* butterfly, that flits at this moment past my window, — the first of the season, — spends almost all its existence in a form where the distinction of sex lies dormant: a few days, I might almost say a few hours, comprise its whole sexual consciousness, and the majority of its race die before reaching that epoch. The law of sex is written absolutely through the whole insect world. Yet everywhere it is written as a secondary and subordinate law. The life which is common to the sexes is the principal life; the life which each sex leads, "as such," is a minor and subordinate thing.

The same rule pervades nature. Two riders pass down the street before my window. One rides a horse, the other a mare. The animals were perhaps foaled in the same stable, of the same progenitors. They have been reared alike, fed alike, trained alike, ridden alike; they need the same exercise, the same grooming; nine tenths of their existence are the same, and only the other tenth is different. Their whole organization is marked by the distinction of sex; but, though the marking is ineffaceable, the distinction is not the first or most important fact.

If this be true of the lower animals, it is far

more true of the higher. The mental and moral laws of the universe touch us first and chiefly as human beings. We eat our breakfasts as human beings, not as men or women; and it is the same with nine tenths of our interests and duties in life. In legislating or philosophizing for woman, we must neither forget that she has an organization distinct from that of man, nor must we exaggerate the fact. Not "first the womanly and then the human," but first the human and then the womanly, is to be the order of her training.

DARWIN, HUXLEY, AND BUCKLE

When any woman, old or young, asks the question, Which among all modern books ought I to read first? the answer is plain. She should read Buckle's lecture before the Royal Institution upon "The Influence of Woman on the Progress of Knowledge." It is one of two papers contained in a thin volume called "Essays by Henry Thomas Buckle." As a means whereby a woman may become convinced that her sex has a place in the intellectual universe, this little essay is almost indispensable. Nothing else quite takes its place.

Darwin and Huxley seem to make woman simply a lesser man, weaker in body and mind, — an affectionate and docile animal, of inferior

grade. That there is any aim in the distinction of the sexes, beyond the perpetuation of the race, is nowhere recognized by them, so far as I know. That there is anything in the intellectual sphere to correspond to the physical difference; that here also the sexes are equal yet diverse, and each the natural completion and complement of the other, — this neither Huxley nor Darwin explicitly recognizes. And with the utmost admiration for their great teachings in other ways, I must think that here they are open to the suspicion of narrowness.

Huxley wrote in "The Reader," in 1864, a short paper called "Emancipation — Black and White," in which, while taking generous ground in behalf of the legal and political position of woman, he yet does it pityingly, *de haut en bas*, as for a creature hopelessly inferior, and so heavily weighted already by her sex that she should be spared all further trials. Speaking through an imaginary critic, who seems to represent himself, he denies "even the natural equality of the sexes," and declares "that in every excellent character, whether mental or physical, the average woman is inferior to the average man, in the sense of having that character less in quantity and lower in quality." Finally he goes so far as "to defend the startling paradox that even in physical beauty man is the supe-

rior." He admits that for a brief period of early youth the case may be doubtful, but claims that after thirty the superior beauty of man is unquestionable. Thus reasons Huxley; the whole essay being included in his volume of "Lay Sermons, Addresses, and Reviews." [1]

Darwin's best statements on the subject may be found in his "Descent of Man." [2] He is, as usual, more moderate and guarded than Huxley. He says, for instance: "It is generally admitted that with women the powers of intuition, of rapid perception, and perhaps of imitation, are more strongly marked than in man; but some, at least, of these faculties are characteristic of the lower races, and therefore of a past and lower state of civilization." Then he passes to the usual assertion that man has thus far attained to a higher eminence than woman. "If two lists were made of the most eminent men and women in poetry, painting, sculpture, music, — comprising composition and performance, — history, science, and philosophy, with half a dozen names under each subject, the two lists would not bear comparison." But the obvious answer, that nearly every name on his list, upon the masculine side, would probably be taken from periods when woman was excluded from any fair competition, — this he does not seem

[1] Pp. 22, 23, Am. ed. [2] Vol. ii. p. 311, Am. ed.

to recognize at all. Darwin, of all men, must admit that superior merit generally arrives later, not earlier, on the scene; and the question for him to answer is, not whether woman equalled man in the first stages of the intellectual "struggle for life," but whether she is not gaining on him now.

If, in spite of man's enormous advantage in the start, woman is already overtaking his very best performances in several of the highest intellectual departments, — as, for instance, prose fiction and dramatic representation, — then it is mere dogmatism in Mr. Darwin to deny that she may yet do the same in other departments. We in this generation have actually seen this success achieved by Rachel and Ristori in the one art, by "George Sand" and "George Eliot" in the other. Woman is, then, visibly gaining on man in the sphere of intellect; and, if so, Mr. Darwin, at least, must accept the inevitable inference.

But this is arguing the question on the superficial facts merely. Buckle goes deeper, and looks to principles. That superior quickness of women, which Darwin dismisses so lightly as something belonging to savage epochs, is to Buckle the sign of a quality which he holds essential, not only to literature and art, but to science itself. Go among ignorant women, he

says, and you will find them more quick and intelligent than equally ignorant men. A woman will usually tell you the way in the street more readily than a man can; a woman can always understand a foreigner more easily; and Dr. Currie says in his letters, that when a laborer and his wife came to consult him, the man always got all the information from the wife. Buckle illustrates this at some length, and points out that a woman's mind is by its nature deductive and quick; a man's mind, inductive and slow; that each has its value, and that science profoundly needs both.

"I will endeavor," he says, "to establish two propositions. First, that women naturally prefer the deductive method to the inductive. Secondly, that women, by encouraging in men deductive habits of thought, have rendered an immense though unconscious service to the progress of science, by preventing scientific investigators from being as exclusively inductive as they would otherwise be."

Then he shows that the most important scientific discoveries of modern times — as of the law of gravitation by Newton, the law of the forms of crystals by Haüy, and the metamorphosis of plants by Goethe — were all essentially the results of that *a priori* or deductive method "which, during the last two centuries,

Englishmen have unwisely despised." They were all the work, in a manner, of the imagination, — of the intuitive or womanly quality of mind. And nothing can be finer or truer than the words in which Buckle predicts the benefits that are to come from the intellectual union of the sexes for the work of the future. "In that field which we and our posterity have yet to traverse, I firmly believe that the imagination will effect quite as much as the understanding. Our poetry will have to reinforce our logic, and we must feel quite as much as we must argue. Let us, then, hope that the imaginative and emotional minds of one sex will continue to accelerate the great progress by acting upon and improving the colder and harder minds of the other sex. By this coalition, by this union of different faculties, different tastes, and different methods, we shall go on our way with the greater ease."

THE SPIRIT OF SMALL TYRANNY

When Mr. John Smauker and the Bath footmen invited Sam Weller to their "swarry," consisting of a boiled leg of mutton, each guest had some expression of contempt and wrath for the humble little green-grocer who served them, — "in the true spirit," Dickens says, "of the very smallest tyranny." The very fact that they were

subject to being ordered about in their own persons gave them a peculiar delight in issuing tyrannical orders to others: just as sophomores in college torment freshmen because other sophomores once teased the present tormentors themselves; and Irishmen denounce the Chinese for underbidding them in the labor market, precisely as they were themselves denounced by native-born Americans thirty years ago. So it has sometimes seemed to me that the men whose own positions and claims are really least commanding are those who hold most resolutely that women should be kept in their proper place of subordination.

A friend of mine maintains the theory that men large and strong in person are constitutionally inclined to do justice to women, as fearing no competition from them in the way of bodily strength; but that small and weak men are apt to be vehemently opposed to anything like equality in the sexes. He quotes in defence of his theory the big soldier in London who justified himself for allowing his little wife to chastise him, on the ground that it pleased her and did not hurt him; and on the other hand cites the extreme domestic tyranny of the dwarf Quilp. He declares that in any difficult excursion among woods and mountains, the guides and the able-bodied men are often willing

to have women join the party, while it is sure to be opposed by those who doubt their own strength or are reluctant to display their weakness. It is not necessary to go so far as my friend goes; but many will remember some fact of this kind, making such theories appear not quite so absurd as at first.

Thus it seems from the "Life and Letters" of Sydney Dobell, the English poet, that he was opposed both to woman suffrage and woman authorship, believing the movement for the former to be a "blundering on to the perdition of womanhood." It appears that against all authorship by women his convictions yearly grew stronger, he regarding it as "an error and an anomaly." It seems quite in accordance with my friend's theory to hear, after this, that Sydney Dobell was slight in person and a lifelong invalid; nor is it surprising, on the same theory, that his poetry took no deep root, and that it will not be likely to survive long, except perhaps in his weird ballad of "Ravelston." But he represents a large class of masculine intellects, of secondary and mediocre quality, whose opinions on this subject are not so much opinions as instinctive prejudices against a competitor who may turn out their superior. Whether they know it, or not, their aversion to the authorship of women is very much like the

conviction of a weak pedestrian, that women are not naturally fitted to take long walks; or the opinion of a man whose own accounts are in a muddle, that his wife is constitutionally unfitted to understand business.

It is a pity to praise either sex at the expense of the other. The social inequality of the sexes was not produced so much by the voluntary tyranny of man, as by his great practical advantage at the outset; human history necessarily beginning with a period when physical strength was sole ruler. It is unnecessary, too, to consider in how many cases women may have justified this distrust; and may have made themselves as obnoxious as Horace Walpole's maids of honor, whose coachman left his savings to his son on condition that he should never marry a maid of honor. But it is safe to say that on the whole the feeling of contempt for women, and the love to exercise arbitrary power over them, is the survival of a crude impulse which the world is outgrowing, and which is in general least obvious in the manliest men. That clear and able English writer, Walter Bagehot, well describes "the contempt for physical weakness and for women which marks early society. The non-combatant population is sure to fare ill during the ages of combat. But these defects, too, are cured or lessened; women have

now marvellous means of winning their way in the world; and mind without muscle has far greater force than muscle without mind." [1]

THE NOBLE SEX

A highly educated American woman of my acquaintance once employed a French tutor in Paris to assist her in teaching Latin to her little grandson. The Frenchman brought with him a Latin grammar, written in his own language, with which my friend was quite pleased, until she came to a passage relating to the masculine gender in nouns, and claiming grammatical precedence for it on the ground that the male sex is the noble sex, — "*le sexe noble.*" "Upon that," she said, "I burst forth in indignation, and the poor teacher soon retired. But I do not believe," she added, "that the Frenchman has the slightest conception, up to this moment, of what I could find in that phrase to displease me."

I do not suppose he could. From the time when the Salic Law set French women aside from the royal succession, on the ground that the kingdom of France was "too noble to be ruled by a woman," the claim of nobility has been all on one side. The State has strengthened the Church in this theory, the Church

[1] *Physics and Politics*, p. 79.

has strengthened the State; and the result of all is, that French grammarians follow both these high authorities. When even the good Père Hyacinthe teaches, through the New York "Independent," that the husband is to direct the conscience of his wife, precisely as the father directs that of his child, what higher philosophy can you expect of any Frenchman than to maintain the claims of "*le sexe noble*"?

We see the consequence, even among the most heterodox Frenchmen. Rejecting all other precedents and authorities, the poor Communists still held to this. Consider, for instance, this translation of a marriage contract under the Commune, which lately came to light in a trial reported in the "Gazette des Tribunaux:" —

FRENCH REPUBLIC.

The citizen Anet, son of Jean Louis Anet, and the *citoyenne* Maria Saint; she engaged to follow the said citizen everywhere and to love him always. — ANET. MARIA SAINT.

Witnessed by the under-mentioned citizen and *citoyenne*. — FOURIER. LAROCHE.

PARIS, April 22, 1871.

What a comfortable arrangement is this! Poor *citoyenne* Maria Saint, even when all human laws have suspended their action, still holds by her grammar, still must annex herself

to *le sexe noble.* She still must follow citizen Anet as the feminine pronoun follows the masculine, or as a verb agrees with its nominative case in number and in person. But with what a lordly freedom from all obligation does citizen Anet, representative of this nobility of sex, accept the allegiance! The citizeness may "follow him," certainly, — so long as she is not in the way, — and she must "love him always;" but he is not bound. Why should he be? It would be quite ungrammatical.

Yet, after all is said and done, there is a brutal honesty in this frank subordination of the woman according to the grammar. It has the same merit with the old Russian marriage consecration: "Here, wolf, take thy lamb," which at least put the thing clearly, and made no nonsense about it. I do not know that anywhere in France the wedding ritual is now so severely simple as this, but I know that in some French villages the bride is still married in a mourning-gown. I should think she would be.

THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR GRANDMOTHERS

Every young woman of the present generation, so soon as she ventures to have a headache or a set of nerves, is immediately confronted by indignant critics with her grandmother. If the grandmother is living, the fact of her exist-

ence is appealed to: if there is only a departed grandmother to remember, the maiden is confronted with a ghost. That ghost is endowed with as many excellences as those with which Miss Betsey Trotwood endowed the niece that never had been born; and just as David Copperfield was reproached with the virtues of his unborn sister who "would never have run away," so that granddaughter with the headache is reproached with the ghostly perfections of her grandmother, who never had a headache — or, if she had, it is luckily forgotten. It is necessary to ask, sometimes, what was really the truth about our grandmothers? Were they such models of bodily perfection as is usually claimed?

If we look at the early colonial days, we are at once met by the fact, that although families were then often larger than is now common, yet this phenomenon was by no means universal, and was balanced by a good many childless homes. Of this any one can satisfy himself by looking over any family history; and he can also satisfy himself of the fact, — first pointed out, I believe, by Mrs. Dall, — that third and fourth marriages were then obviously and unquestionably more common than now. The inference would seem to be, that there is a little illusion about the health of those days, as there

is about the health of savage races. In both cases, it is not so much that the average health is greater under rude social conditions, as that these conditions kill off the weak, and leave only the strong. Modern civilized society, on the other hand, preserves the health of many men and women — and permits them to marry, and become parents — who under the severities of savage life or of pioneer life would have died, and given way to others.

On this I will not dwell; because these primeval ladies were not strictly our grandmothers, being farther removed. But of those who were our grandmothers, — the women of the Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary epochs, — we happen to have very definite physiological observations recorded; not very flattering, it is true, but frank and searching. What these good women are in the imagination of their descendants, we know. Mrs. Stowe describes them as "the race of strong, hardy, cheerful girls that used to grow up in country places, and made the bright, neat New England kitchens of olden times;" and adds, "This race of women, pride of olden time, is daily lessening; and in their stead come the fragile, easily fatigued, languid girls of a modern age, drilled in book-learning, ignorant of common things."

What, now, was the testimony of those who

saw our grandmothers in the flesh? As it happens, there were a good many foreigners, generally Frenchmen, who came to visit the new Republic during the presidency of Washington. Let us take, for instance, the testimony of the two following.

The Abbé Robin was a chaplain in Rochambeau's army during the Revolution, and wrote thus in regard to the American ladies in his "Nouveau Voyage dans l'Amérique Septentrionale," published in 1782 :—

"They are tall and well-proportioned; their features are generally regular; their complexions are generally fair and without color. . . . At twenty years of age the women have no longer the freshness of youth. At thirty-five or forty they are wrinkled and decrepit. The men are almost as premature."

Again: The Chevalier Louis Félix de Beaujour lived in the United States from 1804 to 1814, as consul-general and *chargé d'affaires;* and wrote a book, immediately after, which was translated into English under the title, "A Sketch of the United States at the Commencement of the Present Century." In this he thus describes American women :—

"The women have more of that delicate beauty which belongs to their sex, and in general have finer features and more expression in their physi-

ognomy. Their stature is usually tall, and nearly all are possessed of a light and airy shape, — the breast high, a fine head, and their color of a dazzling whiteness. Let us imagine, under this brillant form, the most modest demeanor, a chaste and virginal air, accompanied by those single and unaffected graces which flow from artless nature, and we may have an idea of their beauty; but this beauty fades and passes in a moment. At the age of twenty-five their form changes, and at thirty the whole of their charms have disappeared."

These statements bring out a class of facts, which, as it seems to me, are singularly ignored by some of our physiologists. They indicate that the modification of the American type began early, and was, as a rule, due to causes antedating the fashions or studies of the present day. Here are our grandmothers and great-grandmothers as they were actually seen by the eyes of impartial or even flattering critics. These critics were not Englishmen, accustomed to a robust and ruddy type of women, but Frenchmen, used to a type more like the American. They were not mere hasty travellers; for the one lived here ten years, and the other was stationed for some time at Newport, R. I., in a healthy locality, noted in those days for the beauty of its women. Yet we find it their verdict upon these grandmothers of nearly a

hundred years ago, that they showed the same delicate beauty, the same slenderness, the same pallor, the same fragility, the same early decline, with which their granddaughters are now reproached.

In some respects, probably, the physical habits of the grandmothers were better: but an examination of their portraits will satisfy any one that they laced more tightly than their descendants, and wore their dresses lower in the neck; and as for their diet, we have the testimony of another French traveller, Volney, who was in America from 1795 to 1798, that "if a premium were offered for a regimen most destructive to the teeth, the stomach, and the health in general, none could be devised more efficacious for these ends than that in use among this people." And he goes on to give particulars, showing a far worse condition in respect to cookery and diet than now prevails in any decent American society.

We have therefore strong evidence that the essential change in the American type was effected in the last century, not in this. Dr. E. H. Clarke says, "A century does not afford a period long enough for the production of great changes. That length of time could not transform the sturdy German *fräulein* and robust English damsel into the fragile American miss."

And yet it is pretty clear that the first century and a half of our colonial life had done just this for our grandmothers. And, if so, our physiologists ought to conform their theories to the facts.

THE PHYSIQUE OF AMERICAN WOMEN

I was talking the other day with a New York physician, long retired from practice, who after an absence of a dozen years in Europe has returned within a year to this country. He volunteered the remark, that nothing had so impressed him since his return as the improved health of Americans. He said that his wife had been equally struck with it; and that they had noticed it especially among the inhabitants of cities, among the more cultivated classes, and in particular among women.

It so happened, that within twenty-four hours almost precisely the same remark was made to me by another gentleman of unusually cosmopolitan experience, and past middle age. He further fortified himself by a similar assertion made him by Charles Dickens, in comparing his second visit to this country with his first. In answer to an inquiry as to what points of difference had most impressed him, Dickens said, "Your people, especially the women, look better fed than formerly."

It is possible that in all these cases the witnesses may have been led to exaggerate the original evil, while absent from the country, and so may have felt some undue reaction on their arrival. One of my informants went so far as to express confidence that among his circle of friends in Boston and in London a dinner party of half a dozen Americans would outweigh an English party of the same number. Granting this to be too bold a statement, and granting the unscientific nature of all these assertions, they still indicate a probability of their own truth until refuted by facts on the other side. They are further corroborated by the surprise expressed by Huxley and some other recent Englishmen at finding us a race more substantial than they had supposed.

The truth seems to be, that Nature is endeavoring to take a new departure in the American, and to produce a race more finely organized, more sensitive, more pliable, and of more nervous energy, than the races of Northern Europe; that this change of type involves some risk to health in the process, but promises greater results whenever the new type shall be established. I am confident that there has been within the last half-century a great improvement in the physical habits of the more cultivated classes, at least, in this country, —

better food, better air, better habits as to bathing and exercise. The great increase of athletic games; the greatly increased proportion of seaside and mountain life in summer; the thicker shoes and boots of women and little girls, permitting them to go out more freely in all weathers, — these are among the permanent gains. The increased habit of dining late, and of taking only a lunch at noon, is of itself an enormous gain to the professional and mercantile classes, because it secures time for eating and for digestion. Even the furnaces in houses, which seemed at first so destructive to the very breath of life, turn out to have given a new lease to it; and open fires are being rapidly reintroduced as a provision for enjoyment and health, when the main body of the house has been tempered by the furnace. There has been, furthermore, a decided improvement in the bread of the community, and a very general introduction of other farinaceous food. All this has happened within my own memory, and gives *a priori* probability to the alleged improvement in physical condition within twenty years.

And, if these reasonings are still insufficient on the one side, it must be remembered that the facts of the census are almost equally inadequate when quoted on the other. If, for

instance, all the young people of a New Hampshire village take a fancy to remove to Wisconsin, it does not show that the race is dying out because their children swell the birth-rate of Wisconsin instead of New Hampshire. If in a given city the births among the foreign-born population are twice as many in proportion as among the American, we have not the whole story until we learn whether the deaths are not twice as many also. If so, the inference is that the same recklessness brought the children into the world and sent them out of it; and no physiological inference whatever can be drawn. It was clearly established by the medical commission of the Boston Board of Health, a few years ago, that "the general mortality of the foreign element is much greater than that of the native element of our population." "This is found to be the case," they add, "throughout the United States as well as in Boston."

So far as I can judge, all our physiological tendencies are favorable rather than otherwise: and the transplantation of the English race seems now likely to end in no deterioration, but in a type more finely organized, and more comprehensive and cosmopolitan; and this without loss of health, of longevity, or of physical size and weight. And, if this is to hold

true, it must be true not only of men, but of women.

THE LIMITATIONS OF SEX

Are there any inevitable limitations of sex?

Some reformers, apparently, think that there are not, and that the best way to help woman is to deny the fact of limitations. But I think the great majority of reformers would take a different ground, and would say that the two sexes are mutually limited by nature. They would doubtless add that this very fact is an argument for the enfranchisement of woman: for, if woman is a mere duplicate of man, man can represent her; but if she has traits of her own, absolutely distinct from his, then he cannot represent her, and she should have a voice and a vote of her own.

To this last body of believers I belong. I think that all legal or conventional obstacles should be removed, which debar woman from determining for herself, as freely as man determines, what the real limitations of sex are, and what restrictions are merely conventional. But, when all is said and done, there is no doubt that plenty of limitations will remain on both sides.

That man has such limitations is clear. No matter how finely organized he may be, how

sympathetic, how tender, how loving, there is yet a barrier, never to be passed, that separates him from the most precious part of the woman's kingdom. All the wondrous world of motherhood, with its unspeakable delights, its holy of holies, remains forever unknown by him; he may gaze, but never enter. That halo of pure devotion, which makes a Madonna out of so many a poor and ignorant woman, can never touch his brow. Many a man loves children more than many a woman: but, after all, it is not he who has borne them; to that peculiar sacredness of experience he can never arrive. But never mind whether the loss be a great one or a small one: it is distinctly a limitation; and to every loving mother it is a limitation so important that she would be unable to weigh all the privileges and powers of manhood against this peculiar possession of her child.

Now, if this be true, and if man be thus distinctly limited by the mere fact of sex, can the woman complain that she also should have some natural limitations? Grant that she should have no unnecessary restrictions; and that the course of human progress is constantly setting aside, as unnecessary, point after point that was once held essential. Still, if she finds — as she undoubtedly will find — that some natural barriers and hindrances remain at last,

and that she can no more do man's whole work in the world than he can do hers, why should she complain? If he can accept his limitations, she must be prepared also to accept hers.

Some of our physiological reformers declare that a girl will be perfectly healthy if she can only be sensibly dressed, and can "have just as much outdoor exercise as the boys, and of the same sort, if she choose it." But I have observed that matter a good deal, and have watched the effect of boyish exercise on a good many girls; and I am satisfied that so far from being safely turned loose, as boys can be, they need, for physical health, the constant supervision of wise mothers. Otherwise the very exposure that only hardens the boy may make the girl an invalid for life. The danger comes from a greater sensitiveness of structure, — not weakness, properly so called, since it gives, in certain ways, more power of endurance, — a greater sensitiveness which runs through all a woman's career, and is the expensive price she pays for the divine destiny of motherhood. It is another natural limitation.

No wise person believes in any "reform against Nature," or that we can get beyond the laws of Nature. If I believed the limitations of sex to be inconsistent with woman suffrage for instance, I should oppose it; but I do

not see why a woman cannot form political opinions by her baby's cradle, as well as her husband in his workshop, while her very love for the child commits her to an interest in good government. Our duty is to remove all the artificial restrictions we can. That done, it will not be hard for man or woman to acquiesce in the natural limitations.

III

TEMPERAMENT

Ἀνδρὸς καὶ γυναικὸς ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετή. — ANTISTHENES in Diogenes Laertius, vi. 1, 5.

"Virtue in man and woman is the same."

THE INVISIBLE LADY

The Invisible Lady, as advertised in all our cities a good many years ago, was a mysterious individual who remained unseen, and had apparently no human organs except a brain and a tongue. You asked questions of her, and she made intelligent answers; but where she was, you could no more discover than you could find the man inside the Automaton Chess-Player. Was she intended as a satire on womankind, or as a sincere representation of what womankind should be? To many men, doubtless, she would have seemed the ideal of her sex, could only her brain and tongue have disappeared like the rest of her faculties. Such men would have liked her almost as well as that other mysterious personage on the London signboard, labelled "The Good Woman,"

and represented by a female figure without a head.

It is not that any considerable portion of mankind actually wishes to abolish woman from the universe. But the opinion dies hard that she is best off when least visible. These appeals which still meet us for "the sacred privacy of woman" are only the Invisible Lady on a larger scale. In ancient Bœotia, brides were carried home in vehicles whose wheels were burned at the door in token that they would never again be needed. In ancient Rome, it was a queen's epitaph, "She stayed at home, and spun," — *Domum servavit, lanam fecit.* In Turkey, not even the officers of justice can enter the apartments of a woman without her lord's consent. In Spain and Spanish America, the veil replaces the four walls of the house, and is a portable seclusion. To be visible is at best a sign of peasant blood and occupations; to be high-bred is to be invisible.

In the Azores I found that each peasant family endeavored to secure for one or more of its daughters the pride and glory of living unseen. The other sisters, secure in innocence, tended cattle on lonely mountain-sides, or toiled bare-legged up the steep ascents, their heads crowned with orange-baskets. The chosen sister was taught to read, to embroider, and to

dwell indoors; if she went out it was only under escort, and with her face buried in a hood of almost incredible size, affording only a glimpse of the poor pale cheeks, quite unlike the rosy vigor of the damsels on the mountain-side. The girls, I was told, did not covet this privilege of seclusion; but let us be genteel, or die.

Now all that is left of the Invisible Lady among ourselves is only the remnant of this absurd tradition. In the seaside town where I write, ladies of fashion usually go veiled in the streets, and so general is the practice that little girls often veil their dolls. They all suppose it to be done for complexion or for ornament; just as people still hang straps on the backs of their carriages, not knowing that it is a relic of the days when footmen stood there and held on. But the veil represents a tradition of seclusion, whether we know it or not; and the dread of hearing a woman speak in public, or of seeing a woman vote, represents precisely the same tradition. It is entitled to no less respect, and no more.

Like all traditions, it finds something in human nature to which to attach itself. Early girlhood, like early boyhood, needs to be guarded and sheltered, that it may mature unharmed. It is monstrous to make this an excuse for keeping a woman, any more than a

man, in a condition of perpetual subordination and seclusion. The young lover wishes to lock up his angel in a little world of her own, where none may intrude. The harem and the seraglio are simply the embodiment of this desire. But the maturer man and the maturer race have found that the beloved being should be something more.

After this discovery is made, the theory of the Invisible Lady disappears. It is less of a shock for an American to hear a woman speak in public than it is for an Oriental to see her show her face in public at all. Once open the door of the harem, and she has the freedom of the house: the house includes the front door, and the street is but a prolonged doorstep. With the freedom of the street comes inevitably a free access to the platform, the tribunal, and the pulpit. You might as well try to stop the air in its escape from a punctured balloon, as to try, when woman is once out of the harem, to put her back there. Ceasing to be an Invisible Lady, she must become a visible force: there is no middle ground. There is no danger that she will not be anchored to the cradle, when cradle there is; but it will be by an elastic cable, that will leave her as free to think and vote as to pray. No woman is less a mother because she cares for all the concerns

of the world into which her child is born. It was John Quincy Adams who said, defending the political petitions of the women of Plymouth, that "women are not only justified, but exhibit the most exalted virtue, when they do depart from the domestic circle, and enter on the concerns of their country, of humanity, and of their God."

SACRED OBSCURITY

In the preface to that ill-named but delightful book, the "Remains of the late Mrs. Richard Trench," there is a singular remark by the editor, her son. He says that "the adage is certainly true in regard to the British matron, *Bene vixit quæ bene latuit*," the meaning of this phrase being, "She has lived well who has kept herself well out of sight." Applying this to his beloved mother, he further expresses a regret at disturbing her "sacred obscurity." Then he goes on to disturb it pretty effectually by printing a thick octavo volume of her most private letters.

It is a great source of strength and advantage to reformers, that there are always men preserved to be living examples of this good old Oriental doctrine of "sacred obscurity." Just as Mr. Darwin needs for the demonstration of his theory that the lower orders of creation should still be present in visible form

for purposes of comparison, so every reformer needs to fortify his position by showing examples of the original attitude from which society has been gradually emerging. If there had been no Oriental seclusion, many things in the present position of woman would be inexplicable. But when we point to that; when we show that even in the more enlightened Eastern countries it is still held indecorous to allude to the feminine members of a man's family; when we see among the Christian nations of Southern Europe many lingering traits of this same habit of seclusion; and when we find an archdeacon of the English Church still clinging to the theory, even while exhibiting his mother's family letters to the whole world, — we more easily understand the course of development.

These reassertions of the Oriental theory are simply reversions, as a naturalist would say, to the original type. They are instances of "atavism," like the occasional appearance of six fingers on one hand in a family where the great-great-grandfather happened to possess that ornament. Such instances can always be found, when one takes the pains to look for them. Thus a critic, discussing in the "Atlantic Monthly" Mr. Mahaffy's book on "Social Life in Greece," is surprised that this writer should quote, in proof of the degradation of

woman in Athens, the remark attributed to Pericles, "That woman is best who is least spoken of among men, whether for good or for evil." "In our opinion," adds the reviewer, "that remark was wise then, and is wise now." The Oriental theory is not then, it seems, extinct; and we are spared the pains of proving that it ever existed.

If this theory be true, how falsely has the admiration of mankind been given! If the most obscure woman is best, the most conspicuous must undoubtedly be worst. Tried by this standard, how unworthy must have been Elizabeth Barrett Browning, how reprehensible must be Dorothea Dix, what a model of all that is discreditable is Rosa Bonheur, what a crowning instance of human depravity is Florence Nightingale! Yet how consoling the thought, that, while these disreputable persons were thus wasting their substance in the riotous performance of what the world weakly styled good deeds, there were always women who saw the folly of such efforts; women who by steady devotion to eating, drinking, and sleeping continued to keep themselves in sacred obscurity, and to prove themselves the ornaments of their sex, inasmuch as no human being ever had occasion to mention their names!

But alas for human inconsistency! As for

this inverse-ratio theory, — this theory of virtue so exalted that it has never been known or felt or mentioned among men, — it is to be observed that those who hold it are the first to desert it when stirred by an immediate occasion. Just as a slaveholder, in the old times, after demonstrating to you that freedom was a curse to the negro, would instantly turn round, and inflict this greatest of all curses on some slave who had saved his life; so, I fear, would one of these philosophers, if he were profoundly impressed with any great action done by a woman, give the lie to all his theories, and celebrate her fame. In spite of all his fine principles, if he happened to be rescued from drowning by Grace Darling, he would put her name in the newspaper; if he were tended in hospital by Clara Barton, he would sound her praise; and if his mother wrote as good letters as did Mrs. Trench, he would probably print them to the extent of five hundred pages, as the archdeacon did, and all his gospel of silence would exhale itself in a single sigh of regret in the preface.

VIRTUES IN COMMON

A young friend of mine, who was educated at one of the very best schools for girls in New York city, told me that one day her teacher requested the older girls

to write out a list of virtues suitable to manly character, which they did. A month or more later, when this occurrence was well forgotten, the same teacher bade them write out a list of womanly virtues, she making no reference to the other list. Then she made each girl compare her lists; and they all found with surprise that there was no substantial difference between them. The only variation, in most cases, was, that they had put in a rather vague special virtue of "manliness" in the one case, and "womanliness" in the other; a sort of miscellaneous department or "odd drawer," apparently, in which to group all traits not easily analyzed.

The moral is that, as tested by the common sense of these young people, duty is duty, and the difference between ethics for men and ethics for women lies simply in practical applications, not in principles.

Who can deny that the philosopher Antisthenes was right when he said, "The virtues of the man and the woman are the same"? Not the Christian, certainly; for he accepts as his highest standard the being who in all history best united the highest qualities of both sexes. Not the metaphysician; for his analysis deals with the human mind as such, not with the mind of either sex. Not the evolutionist; for he is accustomed to trace back qualities to their

source, and cannot deny that there is in each sex at least a "survival" of every good and every bad trait. We may say that these qualities are, or may be, or ought to be, distributed unequally between the sexes; but we cannot reasonably deny that each sex possesses a share of every quality, and that what is good in one sex is also good in the other. Man may be the braver, and yet courage in a woman may be nobler than cowardice. Woman may be the purer, and yet purity may be noble in a man.

So clear is this, that some of the very coarsest writers in all literature, and those who have been severest upon women, have yet been obliged to acknowledge it. Take, for instance, Dean Swift, who writes:—

"I am ignorant of any one quality that is amiable in a woman, which is not equally so in a man. I do not except even modesty and gentleness of nature; nor do I know one vice or folly which is not equally detestable in both."

Mrs. Jameson, in her delightful "Commonplace Book," illustrates this admirably by one or two test cases. She takes, for instance, from one of Humboldt's letters a much-admired passage on manly character:—

"Masculine independence of mind I hold to be in reality the first requisite for the formation of a

character of real manly worth. The man who allows himself to be deceived and carried away by his own weakness may be a very amiable person in other respects, but cannot be called a good man: such beings should not find favor in the eyes of a woman, for a truly beautiful and purely feminine nature should be attracted only by what is highest and noblest in the character of man."

"Take now this same bit of moral philosophy," she says, "and apply it to the feminine character, and it reads quite as well:—

"'Feminine independence of mind I hold to be in reality the first requisite for the formation of a character of real feminine worth. The woman who allows herself to be deceived and carried away by her own weakness may be a very amiable person in other respects, but cannot be called a good woman; such beings should not find favor in the eyes of a man, for a truly beautiful and purely manly nature should be attracted only by what is highest and noblest in the character of woman.'"

I have never been able to perceive that there was a quality or grace of character which really belonged exclusively to either sex, or which failed to win honor when wisely exercised by either. It is not thought necessary to have separate editions of books on ethical science, the one for man, the other for woman, like almanacs calculated for different latitudes. The

books that vary are not the scientific works, but little manuals of practical application, — "Duties of Men," "Duties of Women." These vary with times and places: where women do not know how to read, no advice on reading will be found in the women's manuals; where it is held wrong for women to uncover the face, it will be laid down in these manuals as a sin. But ethics are ethics: the great principles of morals, as proclaimed either by science or by religion, do not fluctuate for sex; their basis is in the very foundations of right itself.

This grows clearer when we remember that it is equally true in mental science. There is not one logic for men, and another for women; a separate syllogism, a separate induction: the moment we begin to state intellectual principles, that moment we go beyond sex. We deal then with absolute truth. If an observation is wrong, if a process of reasoning is bad, it makes no difference who brings it forward. Any list of mental processes, any inventory of the contents of the mind, would be identical, so far as sex goes, whether compiled by a woman or a man. These things, like the circulation of the blood or the digestion of food, belong clearly to the ground held in common. The London "Spectator" well said some time since, —

"After all, knowledge is knowledge; and there

is no more a specifically feminine way of describing correctly the origin of the Lollard movement, or the character of Spenser's poetry, than there is a specifically feminine way of solving a quadratic equation, or of proving the forty-seventh problem of Euclid's first book."

All we can say in modification of this is, that there is, after all, a foundation for the rather vague item of "manliness" and "womanliness" in these schoolgirl lists of duties. There is a difference, after all is said and done; but it is something that eludes analysis, like the differing perfume of two flowers of the same genus and even of the same species. The method of thought must be essentially the same in both sexes; and yet an average woman will put more flavor of something we call instinct into her mental action, and the average man something more of what we call logic into his. Whipple tells us that not a man guessed the plot of Dickens's "Great Expectations," while many women did; and this certainly indicates some average difference of quality or method. So the average opinions of a hundred women, on some question of ethics, might very probably differ from the average of a hundred men, while it yet remains true that "the virtues of the man and the woman are the same."

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Blackburn, in his entertaining book, "Artists and Arabs," draws a contrast between Frith's painting of the "Derby Day" and Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair,"—"the former pleasing the eye by its cleverness and prettiness, the latter impressing the spectator by its power and its truthful rendering of animal life. The difference between the two painters is probably more one of education than of natural gifts. But whilst the style of the former is grafted on a fashion, the latter is founded on a rock,—the result of a close study of nature, chastened by classic feeling and a remembrance, it may be, of the friezes of the Parthenon."

Now it is to be observed that this description runs precisely counter to the popular impression as to the work of the two sexes. Novelists like Charles Reade, for instance, who have apparently seen precisely one woman in their lives, and hardly more than one man, and who keep on sketching these two figures most felicitously and brilliantly thenceforward, would be apt to assign these qualities of the artist very differently. Their typical man would do the truthful and powerful work, and everybody would say, "How manly!" Their woman would please by cleverness and prettiness, and everybody would say, "How womanly!" Yet Blackburn

shows us that these qualities are individual, not sexual; that they result from temperament, or, he thinks, still more from training. If Rosa Bonheur does better work than Frith, it is not because she is a woman, nor is it in spite of that; but because, setting sex aside, she is a better artist.

This is not denying the distinctions of sex, but only asserting that they are not so exclusive and all-absorbing as is supposed. It is easy to name other grounds of difference which entirely ignore those of sex, striking directly across them, and rendering a different classification necessary. It is thus with distinctions of race or color, for instance. An Indian man and woman are at many points more like to each other than is either to a white person of the same sex. A black-haired man and woman, or a fair-haired man and woman, are to be classified together in these physiological aspects. So of differences of genius: a man and woman of musical temperament and training have more in common than has either with a person who is of the same sex, but who cannot tell one note from another. So two persons of ardent or imaginative temperament are thus far alike, though the gulf of sex divides them; and so are two persons of cold or prosaic temperament. In a mixed school the teacher cannot class together intel-

lectually the boys as such, and the girls as such: bright boys take hold of a lesson very much as bright girls do, and slow girls as slow boys. Nature is too rich, too full, too varied, to be content with a single basis of classification: she has a hundred systems of grouping, according to sex, age, race, temperament, training, and so on; and we get but a narrow view of life when we limit our theories to one set of distinctions.

As a matter of social philosophy, this train of thought logically leads to coeducation, impartial suffrage, and free coöperation in all the affairs of life. As a matter of individual duty, it teaches the old moral to "act well your part." No wise person will ever trouble himself or herself much about the limitations of sex in intellectual labor. Rosa Bonheur was not trying to work like a woman, or like a man, or unlike either, but to do her work thoroughly and well. He or she who works in this spirit works nobly, and gives an example which will pass beyond the bounds of sex, and help all. The Abbé Liszt, the most gifted of modern pianists, told a friend of mine, his pupil, that he had learned more of music from hearing Madame Malibran sing, than from anything else whatever.

ANGELIC SUPERIORITY

It is better not to base any plea for woman on the ground of her angelic superiority. The argument proves too much. If she is already so perfect, there is every inducement to let well alone. It suggests the expediency of conforming man's condition to hers, instead of conforming hers to man's. If she is a winged creature, and man can only crawl, it is his condition that needs mending.

Besides, one may well be a little incredulous of these vast claims. Granting some average advantage to woman, it is not of such completeness as to base much argument upon it. The minister, looking on his congregation, rarely sees an unmixed angel, either at the head or at the foot of any pew. The domestic servant rarely has the felicity of waiting on an absolute saint at either end of the dinner-table. The lady's-maid has to compare her little observations of human infirmity with those of the valet de chambre. The lover worships the beloved, whether man or woman; but marriage bears rather hard on the ideal in either case; and those who pray out of the same book, "Have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," are not supposed to be offering up petitions for each other only.

We all know many women whose lives are

made wretched by the sins and follies of their husbands. There are also many men whose lives are turned to long wretchedness by the selfishness, the worldliness, or the bad temper of their wives. Domestic tyranny belongs to neither sex by monopoly. If man tortures or depresses woman, she also has a fearful power to corrupt and deprave man. On the other hand, to quote old Antisthenes once more, "the virtues of the man and woman are the same." A refined man is more refined than a coarse woman. A child-loving man is infinitely tenderer and sweeter toward children than a hard and unsympathetic woman. The very qualities that are claimed as distinctively feminine are possessed more abundantly by many men than by many of what is called the softer sex.

Why is it necessary to say all this? Because there is always danger that we who believe in the equality of the sexes should be led into over-statements, which will react against ourselves. It is not safe to say that the ballot-box would be reformed if intrusted to feminine votes alone. Had the voters of the South been all women, it would have plunged earlier into the gulf of secession, dived deeper, and come up even more reluctantly. Were the women of Spain to rule its destinies unchecked, the Pope

would be its master, and the Inquisition might be reëstablished. For all that we can see, the rule of women alone would be as bad as the rule of men alone. It would be as unsafe to give women the absolute control of man as to make man the master of woman.

Let us be a shade more cautious in our reasonings. Woman needs equal rights, not because she is man's better half, but because she is his other half. She needs them, not as an angel, but as a fraction of humanity. Her political education will not merely help man, but it will help herself. She will sometimes be right in her opinions, and sometimes be altogether wrong; but she will learn, as man learns, by her own blunders. The demand in her behalf is that she shall have the opportunity to make mistakes, since it is by that means she must become wise.

In all our towns there is a tendency toward "mixed schools." We rarely hear of the sexes being separated in a school after being once united; but we constantly hear of their being brought together after separation. This union is commonly, but mistakenly, recommended as an advantage to the boys alone. I once heard an accomplished teacher remonstrate against this change, when thus urged. "Why should my girls be sacrificed," she said, "to improve your

boys?" Six months after, she had learned by experience. "Why," she asked, "did you rest the argument on so narrow a ground? Since my school consisted half of boys, I find with surprise that the change has improved both sexes. My girls are more ambitious, more obedient, and more ladylike. I shall never distrust the policy of mixed schools again."

What is true of the school is true of the family and of the state. It is not good for man, or for woman, to be alone. Granting the woman to be, on the whole, the more spiritually minded, it is still true that each sex needs the other. When the rivet falls from a pair of scissors, we do not have them mended because either half can claim angelic superiority over the other half, but because it takes two halves to make a whole.

VICARIOUS HONORS

There is a story in circulation — possibly without authority — to the effect that a certain young lady has ascended so many Alps that she would have been chosen a member of the English Alpine Club but for her misfortune in respect to sex. As a matter of personal recognition, however, and, as it were, of approximate courtesy, her dog, who has accompanied her in all her trips, and is not debased by sex, has been elected into the club.

She has therefore an opportunity for exercising in behalf of her dog that beautiful self-abnegation which is said to be a part of woman's nature, impelling her always to prefer that her laurels should be worn by somebody else.

The dog probably made no objection to these vicarious honors; nor is any objection made by the young gentlemen who reply eloquently to the toast, "The Ladies," at public dinners, or who kindly consent to be educated at masculine colleges on "scholarships" perhaps founded by women. Those who receive the emoluments of these funds must reflect within themselves, occasionally, how grand a thing is this power of substitution given to women, and how pleasant are its occasional results to the substitute. It is doubtless more blessed to give than to receive, but to receive without giving has also its pleasures. Very likely the holder of the scholarship, and the orator who rises with his hand on his heart to "reply in behalf of the ladies," may do their appointed work well; and so did the Alpine dog. Yet, after all, but for the work done by his mistress, the dog would have won no more honor from the Alpine Club than if he had been a chamois.

Nothing since Artemus Ward and his wife's relations has been finer than the generous way in which fathers and brothers disclaim all desire

for profits or honors on the part of their feminine relatives. In a certain system of schools once known to me, the boys had prizes of money on certain occasions, but the successful girls at those times received simply a testimonial of honor for each; "the committee being convinced," it was said, "that this was more consonant with the true delicacy and generosity of woman's nature." So in the new arrangements for opening the University of Copenhagen to young women, Karl Blind writes to the New York "Evening Post," that it is expressly provided that they shall not "share in the academic benefices and stipends which have been set apart for male students." Half of these charities may, for aught that appears, have been established originally by women, like the American scholarships already mentioned. Women, however, can avail themselves of them only by deputy, as the Alp-climbing young lady is represented by her dog.

It is all a beautiful tribute to the disinterestedness of woman. The only pity is that this virtue, so much admired, should not be reciprocated by showing the like disinterestedness toward her. It does not appear that the butchers and bakers of Copenhagen propose to reduce in the case of women students "the benefices and stipends" which are to be paid for daily

food. Young ladies at the university are only prohibited from receiving money, not from needing it. Nor will any of the necessary fatigues of Alpine climbing be relaxed for any young lady because she is a woman. The fatigues will remain in full force, though the laurels be denied. The mountain-passes will make small account of the "tenderness and delicacy of her sex." When the toil is over she will be regarded as too delicate to be thanked for it; but, by way of compensation, the Alpine Club will allow her to be represented by her dog.

THE GOSPEL OF HUMILIATION

"The silliest man who ever lived," wrote Fanny Fern once, "has always known enough, when he says his prayers, to thank God he was not born a woman." President —— of —— College is not a silly man at all, and he is devoting his life to the education of women; yet he seems to feel as vividly conscious of his superior position as even Fanny Fern could wish. If he had been born a Jew, he would have thanked God, in the appointed ritual, for not having made him a woman. If he had been a Mohammedan, he would have accepted the rule which forbids "a fool, a madman, or a woman" to summon the faithful to prayer. Being a Christian clergyman,

with several hundred immortal souls, clothed in female bodies, under his charge, he thinks it his duty, at proper intervals, to notify his young ladies, that, though they may share with men the glory of being sophomores, they still are in a position, as regards the other sex, of hopeless subordination. This is the climax of his discourse, which in its earlier portions contains many good and truthful things: —

"And, as the woman is different from the man, so is she relative to him. This is true on the other side also. They are bound together by mutual relationship so intimate and vital that the existence of neither is absolutely complete except with reference to the other. But there is this difference, that the relation of woman is, characteristically, that of subordination and dependence. This does not imply inferiority of character, of capacity, of value, in the sight of God or man; and it has been the glory of woman to have accepted the position of formal inferiority assigned her by the Creator, with all its responsibilities, its trials, its possible outward humiliations and sufferings, in the proud consciousness that it is not incompatible with an essential superiority; that it does not prevent her from occupying, if she will, an inward elevation of character, from which she may look down with pitying and helpful love on him she calls her lord. Jesus said, 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are

great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' Surely woman need not hesitate to estimate her status by a criterion of dignity sustained by such authority. She need not shrink from a position which was sought by the Son of God, and in whose trials and griefs she will have his sympathy and companionship."

There is a comforting aspect to this discourse, after all. It holds out the hope, that a particularly noble woman may not be personally inferior to a remarkably bad husband, but "may look down with pitying and helpful love on him she calls her lord." The drawback is not only that it insults woman by a reassertion of a merely historical inferiority, which is steadily diminishing, but that it fortifies this by precisely the same talk about the dignity of subordination which has been used to buttress every oppression since the world began. Never yet was there a pious slaveholder who did not quote to his slaves, on Sunday, precisely the same texts with which President —— favors his meek young pupils. Never yet was there a slaveholder who would not shoot through the

head anybody who should attempt to place him in that beautiful position of subjection whose spiritual merits he had just been proclaiming. When it came to that, he was like Thoreau, who believed resignation to be a virtue, but preferred "not to practice it unless it was quite necessary."

Thus, when the Rev. Charles C. Jones of Savannah used to address the slaves on their condition, he proclaimed the beauty of obedience in a way to bring tears to their eyes. And this, he frankly assures the masters, is the way to check insurrection and advance their own "pecuniary interests." He says of the slave, that under proper religious instruction "his conscience is enlightened and his soul is awed; . . . to God he commits the ordering of his lot, and in his station renders to all their dues, obedience to whom obedience, and honor to whom honor. *He dares not wrest from God his own care and protection.* While he sees a preference in the various conditions of men, he remembers the words of the apostle: 'Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.'"[1]

[1] *Religious Instruction of the Negroes.* Savannah, 1842, pp. 208–211.

I must say that the Rev. Mr. Jones's preaching seems to me precisely as good as Dr. ——'s, and that a sensible woman ought to be as much influenced by the one as was Frederick Douglass by the other — that is, not at all. Let the preacher try "subordination" himself, and see how he likes it. The beauty of service, such as Jesus praised, lay in the willingness of the service: a service that is serfdom loses all beauty, whether rendered by man or by woman. My objection to separate schools and colleges for women is that they are too apt to end in such instructions as this.

CELERY AND CHERUBS

There was once a real or imaginary old lady who had got the metaphor of Scylla and Charybdis a little confused. Wishing to describe a perplexing situation, this lady said, —

"You see, my dear, she was between Celery on one side and Cherubs on the other! You know about Celery and Cherubs, don't you? They was two rocks somewhere; and if you did n't hit one, you was pretty sure to run smack on the other."

This describes, as a clever writer in the New York "Tribune" declares, the present condition of women who "agitate." Their Celery and Cherubs are tears and temper.

It is a good hit, and we may well make a note of it. It is the danger of all reformers, that they will vibrate between discouragement and anger. When things go wrong, what is it one's impulse to do? To be cast down, or to be stirred up; to wring one's hands, or clench one's fists, — in short, tears or temper.

"Mother," said a resolute little girl of my acquaintance, "if the dinner was all spoiled, I would n't sit down, and cry! I 'd say, 'Hang it!'" This cherub preferred the alternative of temper, on days when the celery turned out badly. Probably her mother was addicted to the other practice, and exhibited the tears.

But as this alternative is found to exist for both sexes, and on all occasions, why charge it especially on the woman-suffrage movement? Men are certainly as much given to ill temper as women; and, if they are less inclined to tears, they make it up in sulks, which are just as bad. Nicholas Nickleby, when the pump was frozen, was advised by Mr. Squeers to "content himself with a dry polish;" and so there is a kind of dry despair into which men fall, which is quite as forlorn as any tears of women. How many a man has doubtless wished at such times that the pump of his lachrymal glands could only thaw out, and he could give his emotions something more than a

"dry polish"! The unspeakable comfort some women feel in sitting for ten minutes with a handkerchief over their eyes! The freshness, the heartiness, the new life visible in them, when the crying is done, and the handkerchief comes down again!

And, indeed, this simple statement brings us to the real truth, which should have been more clearly seen by the writer who tells this story. She is wrong in saying, "It is urged that men and women stand on an equality, are exactly alike." Many of us urge the "equality:" very few of us urge the "exactly alike." An apple and an orange, a potato and a tomato, a rose and a lily, the Episcopal and the Presbyterian churches, Oxford and Cambridge, Yale and Harvard, — we may surely grant equality in each case, without being so exceedingly foolish as to go on and say that they are exactly alike.

And precisely here is the weak point of the whole case, as presented by this writer. Women give way to tears more readily than men? Granted. Is their sex any the weaker for it? Not a bit. It is simply a difference of temperament: that is all. It involves no inferiority. If you think that this habit necessarily means weakness, wait and see! Who has not seen women break down in tears during some domestic calamity, while the "stronger sex" were

calm; and who has not seen those same women, that temporary excitement being over, rise up and dry their eyes, and be thenceforth the support and stay of their households, and perhaps bear up the "stronger sex" as a stream bears up a ship? I said once to an experienced physician, watching such a woman, "That woman is really great." — "Of course she is," he answered; "did you ever see a woman who was not great, when the emergency required?"

Now, will women carry this same quality of temperament into their public career? Doubtless: otherwise they would cease to be women. Will it be betraying confidence if I own that I have seen two of the very bravest women of my acquaintance — women who have swayed great audiences — burst into tears, during a committee meeting, at a moment of unexpected adversity for "the cause"? How pitiable! our critical observers would have thought. In five minutes that April shower had passed, and those women were as resolute and unconquerable as Queen Elizabeth: they were again the natural leaders of those around them; and the cool and tearless men who sat beside them were nothing — men were "a lost art," as some one says — compared with the inexhaustible moral vitality of those two women.

No: the dangers of "Celery and Cherubs"

are exaggerated. For temper, women are as good as men, and no better. As for tears, long may they flow! They are symbols of that mighty distinction of sex which is as ineffaceable and as essential as the difference between land and sea.

THE NEED OF CAVALRY

In the interesting Buddhist book, "The Wheel of the Law," translated by Henry Alabaster, there is an account of a certain priest who used to bless a great king, saying, "May your majesty have the firmness of a crow, the audacity of a woman, the endurance of a vulture, and the strength of an ant." The priest then told anecdotes illustrating all of these qualities. Who has not known occasions wherein some daring woman has been the Joan of Arc of a perfectly hopeless cause, taken it up where men shrank, carried it through where they had failed, and conquered by weapons which men would never have thought of using, and would have lacked faith to employ even if put into their hands? The wit, the resources, the audacity of women, have been the key to history and the staple of novels, ever since that larger novel called history began to be written.

How is it done? Who knows the secret of their success? All that any man can say is

that the heart takes a large share in the magic. Rogers asserts in his "Table-Talk," that often, when doubting how to act in matters of importance, he had received more useful advice from women than from men. "Women have the understanding of the heart," he said, "which is better than that of the head." Then this instinct, that begins from the heart, reaches other hearts also, and through that controls the will. "Win hearts," said Lord Burleigh to Queen Elizabeth, "and you have hands and purses;" and the greatest of English sovereigns, in spite of ugliness and rouge, in spite of coarseness and cruelty and bad passions, was adored by the nation that she first made great.

It seems to me that women are a sort of cavalry force in the army of mankind. They are not always to be relied upon for that steady "hammering away," which was Grant's one method; but there is a certain Sheridan quality about them, light-armed, audacious, quick, irresistible. They go before the main army; their swift wits go scouting far in advance; they are the first to scent danger, or to spy out chances of success. Their charge is like that of a Tartar horde, or the wild sweep of the Apaches. They are upon you from some wholly unexpected quarter; and this respectable, systematic, well-drilled masculine force is caught and

rolled over and over in the dust, before the man knows what has hit him. Even if repelled and beaten off, this formidable cavalry is unconquered: routed and in confusion to-day, it comes back upon you to-morrow — fresh, alert, with new devices, bringing new dangers. In dealing with it, as the French complained of the Arabs in Algiers, "Peace is not to be purchased by victory." And, even if all seems lost, with what a brilliant final charge it will cover a retreat!

Decidedly, we need cavalry. In older countries, where it has been a merely undisciplined and irregular force, it has often done mischief; and public men, from Demosthenes down, have been lamenting that measures which the statesman has meditated a whole year may be overturned in a day by a woman. Under our American government we have foolishly attempted to leave out this arm of the service altogether; and much of the alleged dulness of our American history has come from this attempt. Those who have been trained in the various reforms where woman has taken an equal part — the anti-slavery reform especially — know well how much of the energy, the dash, the daring, of those movements have come from her. A revolution with a woman in it is stronger than the established order that

omits her. It is not that she is superior to man, but she is different from man; and we can no more spare her than we could spare the cavalry from an army.

THE REASON FIRM, THE TEMPERATE WILL

It is a part of the necessary theory of republican government, that every class and race shall be judged by its highest types, not its lowest. The proposition of the French revolutionary statesman, to begin the work of purifying the world by arresting all the cowards and knaves, is liable to the objection that it would find victims in every circle. Republican government begins at the other end, and assumes that the community generally has good intentions at least, and some common sense, however it may be with individuals. Take the very quality which the newspapers so often deny to women, — the quality of steadiness. "In fact, men's great objection to the entrance of the female mind into politics is drawn from a suspicion of its unsteadiness on matters in which the feelings could by any possibility be enlisted." Thus says the New York "Nation." Let us consider this implied charge against women, and consider it not by generalizing from a single instance, — "just like a woman," as the editors would doubtless say, if a woman had done it, —

but by observing whole classes of that sex, taken together.

These classes need some care in selection, for the plain reason that there are comparatively few circles in which women have yet been allowed enough freedom of scope, or have acted sufficiently on the same plane with men, to furnish a fair estimate of their probable action, were they enfranchised. Still there occur to me three such classes, — the anti-slavery women, the Quaker women, and the women who conduct philanthropic operations in our large cities. If the alleged unsteadiness of women is to be felt in public affairs, it would have been felt in these organizations. Has it been so felt?

Of the anti-slavery movement I can personally testify — and I have heard the same point fully recognized among my elders, such as Garrison, Phillips, and Quincy — that the women contributed their full share, if not more than their share, to the steadiness of that movement, even in times when the feelings were most excited, as, for instance, in fugitive-slave cases. Who that has seen mobs practically put down, and mayors cowed into decency, by the silent dignity of those rows of women who sat, with their knitting, more imperturbable than the men, can read without a smile these doubts of the "steadiness" of that sex? Again, among

Quaker women, I have asked the opinion of prominent Friends, as of John G. Whittier, whether it has been the experience of that body that women were more flighty and unsteady than men in their official action; and have been uniformly answered in the negative. And finally, as to benevolent organizations, a good test is given in the fact, — first pointed out, I believe, by that eminently practical philanthropist, Rev. Augustus Woodbury of Providence, — that the whole tendency has been, during the last twenty years, to put the management, even the financial control, of our benevolent societies, more and more into the hands of women, and that there has never been the slightest reason to reverse this policy. Ask the secretaries of the various boards of State Charities, or the officers of the Social Science Associations, if they have found reason to complain of the want of steadfast qualities in the "weaker sex." Why is it that the legislation of Massachusetts has assigned the class requiring the steadiest of all supervision — the imprisoned convicts — to "five commissioners of prisons, two of whom shall be women"? These are the points which it would be worthy of our journals to consider, instead of hastily generalizing from single instances. Let us appeal from the typical woman of the editorial picture,

— fickle, unsteady, foolish, — to the nobler conception of womanhood which the poet Wordsworth found fulfilled in his own household: —

> "A being breathing thoughtful breath,
> A traveller betwixt life and death;
> *The reason firm, the temperate will;*
> *Endurance, foresight, strength and skill;*
> A perfect woman, nobly planned
> To warn, to comfort, to command,
> And yet a spirit still, and bright
> With something of an angel light."

ALLURES TO BRIGHTER WORLDS, AND LEADS THE WAY

When a certain legislature had "School Suffrage" under consideration, the other day, the suggestion was made by one of the pithiest and quaintest of the speakers, that men were always better for the society of women, and therefore ought to vote in their company. "If all of us," he said, "would stay away from all places where we cannot take our wives and daughters with us, we should keep better company than we now do." This expresses a feeling which grows more and more common among the better class of men, and which is the key to much progress in the condition of women. There can be no doubt that the increased association of the sexes in society, in school, in literature, tends to purify these several spheres of action. Yet, when we come to philosophize

on this, there occur some perplexities on the way.

For instance, the exclusion of woman from all these spheres was in ancient Greece almost complete; yet the leading Greek poets, as Homer and the tragedians, are exceedingly chaste in tone, and in this respect beyond most of the great poets of modern nations. Again, no European nation has quite so far sequestered and subordinated women as has Spain; and yet the whole tone of Spanish literature is conspicuously grave and decorous. This plainly indicates that race has much to do with the matter, and that the mere admission or exclusion of women is but one among several factors. In short, it is easy to make out a case by a rhetorical use of the facts on one side; but, if we look at all the facts, the matter presents greater difficulties.

Again, it is to be noted that in several countries the first women who have taken prominent part in literature have been as bad as the men; as, for instance, Marguerite of Navarre and Mrs. Aphra Behn. This might indeed be explained by supposing that they had to gain entrance into literature by accepting the dissolute standards which they found prevailing. But it would probably be more correct to say that these standards themselves were variable,

and that their variation affected, at certain periods, women as well as men. Marguerite of Navarre wrote religious books as well as merry stories; and we know from Lockhart's Life of Scott, that ladies of high character in Edinburgh used to read Mrs. Behn's tales and plays aloud, at one time, with delight, — although one of the same ladies found, in her old age, that she could not read them to herself without blushing. Shakespeare puts coarse repartees into the mouths of women of stainless virtue. George Sand is not considered an unexceptionable writer; but she tells us in her autobiography that she found among her grandmother's papers poems and satires so indecent that she could not read them through, and yet they bore the names of *abbés* and gentlemen whom she remembered in her childhood as models of dignity and honor. Voltaire inscribes to ladies of high rank, who doubtless regarded it as a great compliment, verses such as not even a poet of the English "fleshly school" would now print at all. In "Poems by Eminent Ladies," — published in 1755 and reprinted in 1774, — there are one or two poems as gross and disgusting as anything in Swift; yet their authors were thought reputable women. Allan Ramsay's "Tea-Table Miscellany" — a collection of English and Scottish songs — was first published in 1724; and

in his preface to the sixteenth edition the editor attributes its great success, especially among the ladies, to the fact that he has carefully excluded all grossness, "that the modest voice and ear of the fair singer might meet with no affront;" and adds, "the chief bent of all my studies being to attain their good graces." There is no doubt of the great popularity enjoyed by the book in all circles; yet it contains a few songs which the most licentious newspaper would not now publish. The inference is irresistible, from this and many other similar facts, that the whole tone of manners and decency has very greatly improved among the European races within a century and a half.

I suspect the truth to be, that, besides the visible influence of race and religion, there has been an insensible and almost unconscious improvement in each sex, with respect to these matters, as time has passed on; and that the mutual desire to please has enabled each sex to help the other, — the sex which is naturally the more refined taking the lead. But I should lay more stress on this mutual influence, and less on mere feminine superiority, than would be laid by many. It is often claimed by teachers that co-education helps not only boys, but also girls, to develop greater propriety of manners. When the sexes are wholly separate, or associate

on terms of entire inequality, no such good influence occurs: the more equal the association, the better for both parties. After all, the Divine model is to be found in the family; and the best ingenuity cannot improve much upon it.

IV

THE HOME

"In respect to the powers and rights of married women, the law is by no means abreast of the spirit of the age. Here are seen the old fossil footprints of feudalism. The law relating to woman tends to make every family a barony or a monarchy or a despotism, of which the husband is the baron, king, or despot, and the wife the dependent, serf, or slave. That this is not always the fact, is not due to the law, but to the enlarged humanity which spurns the narrow limits of its rules. The progress of civilization has changed the family from a barony to a republic; but the law has not kept pace with the advance of ideas, manners, and customs." — W. W. STORY'S Treatise on Contracts not under Seal, § 84, third edition, p. 89.

WANTED — HOMES

We see advertisements, occasionally, of "Homes for Aged Women," and more rarely "Homes for Aged Men." The question sometimes suggests itself, whether it would not be better to begin the provision earlier, and see that homes are also provided, in some form, for the middle-aged and even the young. The trouble is, I suppose, that as it takes two to make a bargain, so it takes at least two to make a home; and unluckily it takes only one to spoil it.

Madame Roland once defined marriage as an institution where one person undertakes to provide happiness for two; and many failures are accounted for, no doubt, by this false basis. Sometimes it is the man, more often the woman, of whom this extravagant demand is made. There are marriages which have proved a wreck almost wholly through the fault of the wife. Nor is this confined to wedded homes alone. I have known a son who lived alone, patiently and uncomplainingly, with that saddest of all conceivable companions, a drunken mother. I have known another young man who supported in his own home a mother and sister, both habitual drunkards. All these were American-born, and all of respectable social position. A house shadowed by such misery is not a home, though it might have proved such but for the sins of women. Such instances are, however, rare and occasional compared with the cases where the same offence in the husband makes ruin of the home.

Then there are the cases where indolence, or selfishness, or vanity, or the love of social excitement, in the woman, unfits her for home life. Here we come upon ground where perhaps woman is the greater sinner. It must be remembered, however, that against this must be balanced the neglect produced by club-life,

or by the life of society-membership, in a man. A brilliant young married belle in London once told me that she was glad her husband was so fond of his club, for it amused him every night while she went to balls. "Married men do not go much into society here," she said, "unless they are regular flirts, — which I do not think my husband would ever be, for he is very fond of me, — so he goes every night to his club, and gets home about the same time that I do. It is a very nice arrangement." It is perhaps needless to add that they are long since divorced.

It is common to denounce club-life in our large cities as destructive of the home. The modern club is simply a more refined substitute for the old-fashioned tavern, and is on the whole an advance in morals as well as manners. In our large cities a man in a certain social coterie belongs to a club, if he can afford it, as a means of contact with his fellows, and to have various conveniences which he cannot so economically obtain at home. A few haunt clubs constantly; the many use them occasionally. More absorbing than these, perhaps, are the secret societies which have so revived among us since the war, and which consume time so fearfully. There was a case mentioned in the newspapers lately of a man who belonged to some twenty of

these associations; and when he died, and each wished to conduct his funeral, great was the strife! In the small city where I write there are seventeen secret societies down in the directory, and I suppose as many more not so conspicuous. I meet men who assure me that they habitually attend a society meeting every evening of the week except Sunday, when they go to church meeting. These are rarely men of leisure; they are usually mechanics or business men of some kind, who are hard at work all day, and never see their families except at meal-times. Their case is far worse, so far as absence from home is concerned, than that of the "club-men" of large cities; for these are often men of leisure, who, if married, at least make home one of their lounging-places, which such secret-society men do not.

I honestly believe that this melancholy desertion of the home is largely due to the traditional separation between the alleged spheres of the sexes. The theory still prevails largely, that home is the peculiar province of the woman, that she has almost no duties out of it; and hence, naturally enough, that the husband has almost no duties in it. If he is amused there, let him stay there; but, as it is not his recognized sphere of duty, he is not actually violating any duty by absenting himself. This

theory even pervades our manuals of morals, of metaphysics, and of popular science; and it is not every public teacher who has the manliness, having once stated it, to modify his statement, as did the venerable President Hopkins of Williams College, when lecturing the other day to the young ladies of Vassar.

"I would," he said, "at this point correct my teaching in 'The Law of Love' to the effect that home is peculiarly the sphere of woman, and civil government that of man. *I now regard the home as the joint sphere of man and woman, and the sphere of civil government more of an open question as between the two.* It is, however, to be lamented that the present agitation concerning the rights of woman is so much a matter of 'rights' rather than of 'duties,' as the reform of the latter would involve the former."

If our instructors in moral philosophy will only base their theory of ethics as broadly as this, we shall no longer need to advertise "Homes Wanted;" for the joint efforts of men and women will soon provide them.

THE ORIGIN OF CIVILIZATION

Nothing throws more light on the whole history of woman than the first illustration in Sir John Lubbock's "Origin of Civilization." A young girl,

almost naked, is being dragged furiously along the ground by a party of naked savages, armed literally to the teeth, while those of another band grasp her by the arm, and almost tear her asunder in the effort to hold her back. These last are her brothers and her friends; the others are — her enemies? As you please to call them. They are her future husband and his kinsmen, who have come to aid him in his wooing.

This was the primitive rite of marriage. Vestiges of it still remain among savage nations. And all the romance and grace of the most refined modern marriage — the orange-blossoms, the bridal veil, the church service, the wedding feast — these are only the "bright consummate flower" reared by civilization from that rough seed. All the brutal encounter is softened into this. Nothing remains of the barbarism except the one word "obey," and even that is going.

Now, to say that a thing is going, is to say that it will presently be gone. To say that anything is changed, is to say that it is to change further. If it never has been altered, perhaps it will not be; but a proved alteration of an inch in a year opens the way to an indefinite modification. The study of the glaciers, for instance, began with the discovery that they

had moved; and from that moment no one doubted that they were moving all the time. It is the same with the position of woman. Once open your eyes to the fact that it has changed, and who is to predict where the matter shall end? It is sheer folly to say, "Her relative position will always be what it has been," when one glance at Sir John Lubbock's picture shows that there is no fixed "has been," but that her original position was long since altered and revised. Those who still use this argument are like those who laughed at the lines of stakes which Agassiz planted across the Aar glacier in 1840. But the stakes settled the question, and proved the motion. *Però si muove:* "But it moves."

The motion once proved, the whole range of possible progress is before us. The amazement of that Chinese visitor in Boston, the other day, when he saw a woman addressing a missionary meeting; the astonishment of all English visitors when young ladies teach classes in geometry and Latin, in our high schools; the surprise of foreigners at seeing the rough throng in the Cooper Institute reading-room submit to the sway of one young woman with a crochet-needle — all these simply testify to the fact that the stakes have moved. That they have yet been carried halfway to the end, who knows?

What a step from the horrible nuptials of those savage days to the poetic marriage of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett — the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" on one side, the "One Word More" on the other! But who can say that the whole relation between man and woman reached its climax there, and that where the past has brought changes so vast the future is to add nothing? Who knows that, when "the world's great bridals come," people may not look back with pity, even on this era of the Brownings? Perhaps even Elizabeth Barrett promised to obey!

At any rate, it is safe to say that each step concedes the probability of another. Even from the naked barbarian to the veiled Oriental, from the savage hut to the carefully enshrined harem, there is a step forward. One more step in the spiral line of progress has brought us to the unveiled face and comparatively free movements of the English or American woman. From the kitchen to the public lecture-room, from that to the lecture-platform, and from that again to the ballot-box, — these are far slighter steps than those which gradually lifted the savage girl of Sir John Lubbock's picture into the possession of the alphabet and the dignity of a home. So easy are these future changes beside those of the past, that to doubt

their possibility is as if Agassiz, after tracing year by year the motion of his Alpine glacier, should deny its power to move one inch farther into the sunny valley, and there to melt harmlessly away.

THE LOW-WATER MARK

We constantly see it assumed, in arguments against any step in the elevation of woman, that her position is a thing fixed permanently by nature, so that there can be in it no great or essential change. Every successive modification is resisted as "a reform against nature;" and this argument from permanence is always that which appears most convincing to conservative minds. Let us see how the facts confirm it.

A story is going the rounds of the newspapers in regard to a Russian peasant and his wife. For some act of disobedience the peasant took the law into his own hands; and his mode of discipline was to tie the poor creature naked to a post in the street, and to call on every passer-by to strike her a blow. Not satisfied with this, he placed her on the ground, and tied heavy weights on her limbs until one arm was broken. When finally released, she made a complaint against him in court. The court discharged him on the ground that he had not exceeded the legal authority of a husband.

Encouraged by this, he caused her to be arrested in return; and the same court sentenced her to another public whipping for disobedience.

No authority was given for this story in the newspaper where I saw it; but it certainly did not first appear in a woman-suffrage newspaper, and cannot therefore be a manufactured "outrage." I use it simply to illustrate the low-water mark at which the position of woman may rest, in the largest Christian nation of the world. All the refinements, all the education, all the comparative justice, of modern society, have been gradually upheaved from some such depth as this. When the gypsies described by Leland treat even the ground trodden upon by a woman as impure, they simply illustrate the low plane from which all the elevation of woman has begun. All these things show that the position of that sex in society, so far from being a thing in itself permanent, has been in reality the most changing of all factors in the social problem. And this inevitably suggests the question, Are we any more sure that her present position is finally and absolutely fixed than were those who observed it at any previous time in the world's history? Granting that her condition was once at low-water mark, who is authorized to say that it has yet reached high tide?

It is very possible that this Russian wife, once scourged back to submission, ended her days in the conviction, and taught it to her daughters, that such was a woman's rightful place. When an American woman of to-day says, "I have all the rights I want," is she on any surer ground? Grant that the difference is vast between the two. How do we know that even the later condition is final, or that anything is final but entire equality before the laws? It is not many years since William Story — in a legal work inspired and revised by his father, the greatest of American jurists — wrote this indignant protest against the injustice of the old common law: —

"In respect to the powers and rights of married women, the law is by no means abreast of the spirit of the age. Here are seen the old fossil footprints of feudalism. The law relating to woman tends to make every family a barony or a monarchy, or a despotism, of which the husband is the baron, king, or despot, and the wife the dependent, serf, or slave. That this is not always the fact is not due to the law, but to the enlarged humanity which spurns the narrow limits of its rules. The progress of civilization has changed the family from a barony to a republic; but the law has not kept pace with the advance of ideas, manners, and customs. And, although public opinion is a check to legal rules on the subject, the rules are feudal and stern. Yet

the position of woman throughout history serves as the criterion of the freedom of the people or an age. When man shall despise that right which is founded only on might, woman will be free and stand on an equal level with him, — a friend and not a dependent." [1]

We know that the law is greatly changed and ameliorated in many places since Story wrote this statement; but we also know how almost every one of these changes was resisted: and who is authorized to say that the final and equitable fulfilment is yet reached?

OBEY

After witnessing the marriage ceremony of the Episcopal Church, the other day, I walked down the aisle with the young rector who had officiated. It was natural to speak of the beauty of the Church service on an occasion like that; but, after doing this, I felt compelled to protest against the unrighteous pledge to obey. "I hope," I said, "to live to see that word expunged from the Episcopal service, as it has been from that of the Methodists. The Roman Catholics, you know, have never had it."

"Why do you object?" he asked. "Is it because you know that they will not obey?"

[1] Story's *Treatise on the Law of Contracts not under Seal*, § 84, p. 89.

"Because they ought not," I said.

"Well," said he, after a few moments' reflection, and looking up frankly, "I do not think they ought!"

Here was a young clergyman of great earnestness and self-devotion, who included it among the sacred duties of his life to impose upon ignorant young girls a solemn obligation, which he yet thought they ought not to incur, and did not believe that they would keep. There could hardly be a better illustration of the confusion in the public mind, or the manner in which "the subjection of woman" is being outgrown, or the subtile way in which this subjection has been interwoven with sacred ties, and baptized "duty."

The advocates of woman suffrage are constantly reproved for using the terms "subjection," "oppression," and "slavery," as applied to woman. They simply commit the same sin as that committed by the original abolitionists. They are "as harsh as truth, as uncompromising as justice." Of course they talk about oppression and emancipation. It is the word *obey* that constitutes the one, and shows the need of the other. Whoever is pledged to obey is technically and literally a slave, no matter how many roses surround the chains. All the more so if the slavery is self-imposed, and sur-

rounded by all the prescriptions of religion. Make the marriage tie as close as church or state can make it; but let it be equal, impartial. That it may be so, the word *obey* must be abandoned or made reciprocal. Where invariable obedience is promised, equality is gone.

That there may be no doubt about the meaning of this word in the marriage covenant, the usages of nations often add symbolic explanations. These are generally simple, and brutal enough to be understood. The Hebrew ceremony, when the bridegroom took off his slipper and struck the bride on the neck as she crossed his threshold, was unmistakable. As my black sergeant said, when a white prisoner questioned his authority, and he pointed to the *chevrons* on his sleeve, "Dat mean guv'ment." All these forms mean simply government also. The ceremony of the slipper has now no recognition, except when people fling an old shoe after the bride, which is held by antiquarians to be the same observance. But it is all preserved and concentrated into a single word, when the bride promises to obey.

The deepest wretchedness that has ever been put into human language, or that has exceeded it, has grown out of that pledge. There is no misery on earth like that of a pure and refined woman who finds herself owned, body and soul,

by a drunken, licentious, brutal man. The very fact that she is held to obedience by a spiritual tie makes it worse. Chattel slavery was not so bad; for, though the master might pervert religion for his own satisfaction, he could not impose upon the slave. Never yet did I see a negro slave who thought it a duty to obey his master; and therefore there was always some dream of release. But who has not heard of some delicate and refined woman, one day of whose torture was equivalent to years of that possible to an obtuse frame, — who had the door of escape ready at hand for years, and yet died a lingering death rather than pass through it; and this because she had promised to obey!

It is said of one of the most gifted women who ever trod American soil, — she being of English birth, — that, before she obtained the divorce which separated her from her profligate husband, she once went for counsel to the wife of her pastor. She unrolled before her the long catalogue of merciless outrages to which she had been subject, endangering finally her health, her life, and that of her children born and to be born. When she turned at last for advice to her confessor, with the agonized inquiry, "What is it my duty to do?" — "Do?" said the stern adviser: "Lie down on the floor,

and let your husband trample on you if he will. That is a woman's duty."

The woman who gave this advice was not naturally inhuman nor heartless: she had simply been trained in the school of obedience. The Jesuit doctrine, that a priest should be as a corpse, *perinde ac cadaver*, in the hands of a superior priest, is not worse. Woman has no right to delegate, nor man to assume, a responsibility so awful. Just in proportion as it is consistently carried out, it trains men from boyhood into self-indulgent tyrants; and, while some women are transformed by it to saints, others are crushed into deceitful slaves. That this was the result of chattel slavery, this nation has at length learned. We learn more slowly the profounder and more subtile moral evil that follows from the unrighteous promise to obey.

WOMAN IN THE CHRYSALIS

When the bride receives the ring upon her finger, and utters — if she utters it — the promise to obey, she sees a poetic beauty in the rite. Turning of her own free will from her maiden liberty, she voluntarily takes the yoke of service upon her. This is her view; but is this the historic fact in regard to marriage? Not at all. The pledge of obedience — the whole theory of inequality

in marriage — is simply what is left to us of a former state of society, in which every woman, old or young, must obey somebody. The state of tutelage, implied in such a marriage, is merely what is left of the old theory of the "Perpetual Tutelage of Women," under the Roman law.

Roman law, from which our civil law is derived, has its foundation evidently in patriarchal tradition. It recognized at first the family only, and that family was held together by paternal power (*patria potestas*). If the father died, his powers passed to the son or grandson, as the possible head of a new family; but these powers could never pass to a woman, and every woman, of whatever age, must be under somebody's legal control. Her father dying, she was still subject through life to her nearest male relations, or to her father's nominees, as her guardians. She was under perpetual guardianship, both as to person and property. No years, no experience, could make her anything but a child before the law.

In Oriental countries the system was still more complete. "A man," says the Gentoo Code of Laws, "must keep his wife so much in subjection that she by no means be mistress of her own action. If the wife have her own free will, notwithstanding she be of a superior caste, she will behave amiss." But this author-

ity, which still exists in India, is not merely conjugal. The husband exerts it simply as being the wife's legal guardian. If the woman be unmarried or a widow, she must be as rigorously held under some other guardianship. It is no uncommon thing for a woman in India to be the ward of her own son. Lucretia Mott or Florence Nightingale would there be in personal subjection to somebody. Any man of legal age would be recognized as a fit custodian for them, but there must be a man.

With some variation of details at different periods, the same system prevailed essentially at Rome, down to the time when Rome became Christian. Those who wish for particulars will find them in an admirable chapter (the fifth) of Maine's "Ancient Law." At one time the husband was held to possess the *patria potestas*, or paternal power, in its full force. By law "the woman passed *in manum viri*, that is, she became the daughter of her husband." All she had became his, and after his death she was retained in the same strict tutelage by any guardians his will might appoint. Afterwards, to soften this rigid bond, the woman was regarded in law as being temporarily deposited by her family with her husband; the family appointed guardians over her; and thus, between the two tyrannies, she won a sort of independ-

ence. Then came Christianity, and swept away the merely parental authority for married women, concentrating all upon the husband. Hence our legislation bears the mark of a double origin, and woman is half recognized as an equal and half as a slave.

It is necessary to remember, therefore, that all the relation of subjection in marriage is merely the residue of an unnatural system, of which all else is long since outgrown. It would have seemed to an ancient Roman a matter of course that a woman should, all her life long, obey the guardians set over her person. It still seems to many people a matter of course that she should obey her husband. To others among us, on the contrary, both these theories of obedience seem barbarous, and the one is merely a relic of the other.

We cannot disregard the history of the Theory of Tutelage. If we could believe that a chrysalis is always a chrysalis, and a butterfly always a butterfly, we could easily leave each to its appropriate sphere; but when we see the chrysalis open, and the butterfly come half out of it, we know that sooner or later it must spread wings, and fly. The theory of tutelage implies the chrysalis. Woman is the butterfly. Sooner or later she will be wholly out.

TWO AND TWO

A young man of very good brains was telling me, the other day, his dreams of his future wife. Rattling on, more in joke than in earnest, he said, "She must be perfectly ignorant, and a bigot: she must know nothing, and believe everything. I should wish to have her from the adjoining room call to me, 'My dear, what do two and two make?'"

It did not seem to me that his demand would be so very hard to fill, since bigotry and ignorance are to be had almost anywhere for the asking; and, as for two and two, I should say that it had always been the habit of women to ask that question of some man, and to rest easily satisfied with the answer. They have generally called, as my friend wished, from some other room, saying, "My dear, what do two and two make?" and the husband or father or brother has answered and said, "My dear, they make four for a man, and three for a woman."

At any given period in the history of woman, she has adopted man's whim as the measure of her rights; has claimed nothing; has sweetly accepted anything; the law of two-and-two itself should be at his discretion. At any given moment, so well was his interpretation received, that it stood for absolute right. In Rome a woman, married or single, could not testify in

court; in the middle ages, and down to quite modern times, she could not hold real estate; thirty years ago she could not, in New England, obtain a collegiate education; even now she can only vote for school officers.

The first principles of republican government are so rehearsed and re-rehearsed, that one would think they must become "as plain as that two and two make four." But we find throughout, that, as Emerson said of another class of reasoners, "Their two is not the real two; their four is not the real four." We find different numerals and diverse arithmetical rules for the two sexes; as, in some Oriental countries, men and women speak different dialects of the same language.

In novels the hero often begins by dreaming, like my friend, of an ideal wife, who shall be ignorant of everything, and have only brains enough to be bigoted. Instead of sighing, like Falstaff, "Oh for a fine young thief, of the age of two and twenty or thereabouts!" the hero sighs for a fine young idiot of similar age. When the hero is successful in his search and wooing, the novelist sometimes mercifully removes the young woman early, like David Copperfield's Dora, she bequeathing the bereaved husband, on her deathbed, to a woman of sense. In real life these convenient interruptions do

not commonly occur, and the foolish youth regrets through many years that he did not select an Agnes instead.

The acute observer Stendhal says, —

"In Paris, the highest praise for a marriageable girl is to say, 'She has great sweetness of character and the disposition of a lamb.' Nothing produces more impression on fools who are looking out for wives. I think I see the interesting couple, two years after, breakfasting together on a dull day, with three tall lackeys waiting upon them!"

And he adds, still speaking in the interest of men: —

"Most men have a period in their career when they might do something great, a period when nothing seems impossible. The ignorance of women spoils for the human race this magnificent opportunity: and love, at the utmost, in these days, only inspires a young man to learn to ride well, or to make a judicious selection of a tailor."[1]

Society, however, discovers by degrees that there are conveniences in every woman's knowing the four rules of arithmetic for herself. Two and two come to the same amount on a butcher's bill, whether the order be given by a man or a woman; and it is the same in all

[1] *De L'Amour*, par de Stendhal (Henri Beyle). Paris, 1868 [written in 1822], pp. 182, 198.

affairs or investments, financial or moral. We shall one day learn that with laws, customs, and public affairs it is the same. Once get it rooted in a woman's mind, that for her, two and two make three only, and sooner or later the accounts of the whole human race fail to balance.

A MODEL HOUSEHOLD

There is an African bird called the hornbill, whose habits are in some respects a model. The female builds her nest in a hollow tree, lays her eggs, and broods on them. So far, so good. Then the male feels that he must also contribute some service; so he walls up the hole closely, giving only room for the point of the female's bill to protrude. Until the eggs are hatched, she is thenceforth confined to her nest, and is in the mean time fed assiduously by her mate, who devotes himself entirely to this object. Dr. Livingstone has seen these nests in Africa, Layard and others in Asia, and Wallace in Sumatra.

Personally I have never seen a hornbill's nest. The nearest approach I ever made to it was when in Fayal I used to pass near a gloomy mansion, of which the front windows were walled up, and only one high window was visible in the rear, beyond the reach of eyes from any neighboring house. In this cheerful abode, I

was assured, a Portuguese lady had been for many years confined by her jealous husband. It was long since any neighbor had caught a glimpse of her, but it was supposed that she was alive. There is no reason to doubt that her husband fed her well. It was simply a case of human hornbill, with the imprisonment made perpetual.

I have more than once asked lawyers whether, in communities where the old common law prevailed, there was anything to prevent such an imprisonment of a married woman; and they have always answered, "Nothing but public opinion." Where the husband has the legal custody of the wife's person, no *habeas corpus* can avail against him. The hornbill household is based on a strict application of the old common law. A Hindoo household was a hornbill household: "a woman, of whatsoever age, should never be mistress of her own actions," said the code of Menu. An Athenian household was a hornbill's nest, and great was the outcry when some Aspasia broke out of it. When the remonstrant petitions legislatures against the emancipation of woman, we seem to hear the twittering of the hornbill mother, imploring to be left inside.

Under some forms, the hornbill theory becomes respectable. There are many peaceful

families, innocent though torpid, where the only dream of existence is to have plenty of quiet, plenty of food, and plenty of well-fed children. For them this African household is a sufficient model. The wife is "a home body." The husband is "a good provider." These are honest people, and have a right to speak. The hornbill theory is only dishonest when it comes — as it often comes — from women who lead the life, not of good stay-at-home fowls, but of paroquets and hummingbirds, — who sorrowfully bemoan the active habits of enlightened women, while they themselves

> "Bear about the mockery of woe
> To midnight dances and the public show."

It is from these women, in Washington, New York, and elsewhere, that the loudest appeal for the hornbill standard of domesticity proceeds. Put them to the test, and give them their chicken-salad and champagne through a hole in the wall only, and see how they like it.

But even the most honest and peaceful conservatives will one day admit that the hornbill is not the highest model. Plato thought that "the soul of our grandame might haply inhabit the body of a bird;" but Nature has kindly provided various types of bird-households to suit all varieties of taste. The bright orioles, filling the summer boughs with color and with song,

are as truly domestic in the freedom of their airy nest as the poor hornbills who ignorantly make home into a dungeon. And certainly each new generation of orioles, spreading free wings from that pendent cradle, affords a happier illustration of judicious nurture than is to be found in the uncouth little offspring of the hornbills, which Wallace describes as "so flabby and semi-transparent as to resemble a bladder of jelly, furnished with head, legs, and rudimentary wings, but with not a sign of a feather, except a few lines of points indicating where they would come."

A SAFEGUARD FOR THE FAMILY

Many German-Americans are warm friends of woman suffrage; but the editors of "Puck," it seems, are not. In a certain number of that comic journal, there was an unfavorable cartoon on this reform; and in a following number, — the number, by the way, which contains that amusing illustration of the vast seaside hotels of the future, with the cheering announcement, "Only one mile to the barber's shop," and "Take the cars to the dining-room," — a lady came to the rescue, and bravely defended woman suffrage. It seems that the original cartoon depicted in the corner a pretty family scene, representing father, mother, and children seated happily to-

gether, with the melancholy motto, "Nevermore, nevermore!" And when the correspondent, Mrs. Blake, very naturally asks what this touching picture has to do with woman suffrage, Puck says, "If the husband in our 'pretty family scene' should propose to vote for the candidate who was obnoxious to his wife, would this 'pretty family scene' continue to be a domestic paradise, or would it remind the spectator of the region in which Dante spent his 'fortnight off'?"

It is beautiful to see how much anxiety there is to preserve the family. Every step in the modification of the old common law, whereby the wife was, in Baron Alderson's phrase, "the servant of her husband," was resisted as tending to endanger the family. The proposal that the wife should control her own earnings, so that her husband should not have the right to collect them in order to pay his gambling debts, was declared by English advocates, in the celebrated case of the Hon. Mrs. Norton, the poetess, to imperil all the future peace of British households. Even the liberal-minded "Punch," about the time Girton College was founded in England, expressed grave doubts whether the harmony of wedded unions would not receive a blow, from the time when wives should be liable to know more Greek than their husbands. Yet

the marriage relation has withstood these innovations. It has not been impaired, either by separate rights, private earnings, or independent Greek: can it be possible that a little voting will overthrow it?

The very ground on which woman suffrage is opposed by its enemies might assuage these fears. If, as we are told, women will not take the pains to vote except upon the strongest inducements, who has so good an opportunity as the husband to bring those inducements to bear? and, if so, what is the separation? Or if, as we are told, women will merely reflect their husbands' political opinions, why should they dispute about them? The mere suggestion of a difference deep enough to quarrel for, implies a real difference of convictions or interests, and indicates that there ought to be an independent representation of each; unless we fall back, once for all, on the common-law tradition that man and wife are one, and that one is the husband. Either the antagonisms which occur in politics are comparatively superficial, in which case they would do no harm; or else they touch matters of real interest and principle, in which case every human being has a right to independent expression, even at a good deal of risk. In either case, the objection falls to the ground.

We have fortunately a means of testing, with some fairness of estimate, the probable amount of this peril. It is generally admitted — and certainly no German-American will deny — that the most fruitful sources of hostility and war in all times have been religious, not political. All merely political antagonism, certainly all which is possible in a republic, fades into insignificance before this more powerful dividing influence. Yet we leave all this great explosive force in unimpeded operation, — at any moment it may be set in action, in any one of those "pretty family scenes" which "Puck" depicts, — while we are solemnly warned against admitting the comparatively mild peril of a political difference! It is like cautioning a manufacturer of dynamite against the danger of meddling with mere edge-tools. Even with all the intensity of feeling on religious matters, few families are seriously divided by them; and the influence of political differences would be still more insignificant.

The simple fact is that there is no better basis for union than mutual respect for each other's opinions; and this can never be obtained without an intelligent independence. "I would rather have a thorn in my side than an echo," said Emerson of friendship; and the same is true of married life. It is the echoes, the

nonentities, of whom men grow tired; it is the women with some flavor of individuality who keep the hearts of their husbands. This is only applying in a higher sense what Shakespeare's Cleopatra saw. When her handmaidens are questioning how to hold a lover, and one says, —

"Give way to him in all: cross him in nothing," —

Cleopatra, from the depth of an unequalled experience, retorts, —

"Thou speakest like a fool: the way to lose him!"

And what "the serpent of old Nile" said, the wives of the future, who are to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, may well ponder. It takes two things different to make a union; and part of that difference may as well lie in matters political as anywhere else.

WOMEN AS ECONOMISTS

An able lawyer of Boston, arguing the other day before a legislative committee in favor of giving to the city council a check upon the expenditures of the school committee, gave as one reason that this body would probably include more women henceforward, and that women were ordinarily more lavish than men in their use of money. The truth of this assumption was questioned at the time; and, the more I think of it, the more

contrary it is to my whole experience. I should say that women, from the very habit of their lives, are led to be more particular about details, and more careful as to small economies. The very fact that they handle less money tends to this. When they are told to spend money, as they often are by loving or ambitious husbands, they no doubt do it freely: they have naturally more taste than men, and quite as much love of luxury. In some instances in this country they spend money recklessly and wickedly, like the heroines of French novels; but as, even in brilliant Paris, the women of the middle classes are notoriously better managers than the men, so we often see, in our scheming America, the same relative superiority. Often have I heard young men say, "I never knew how to economize until after my marriage;" and who has not seen multitudes of instances where women accustomed to luxury have accepted poverty without a murmur for the sake of those whom they loved?

I remember a young girl, accustomed to the gayest society of New York, who engaged herself to a young naval officer, against the advice of the friends of both. One of her near relatives said to me, "Of all the young girls I have ever known, she is the least fitted for a poor man's wife." Yet from the very moment of

her marriage she brought their joint expenses within his scanty pay, and even saved a little money from it. Everybody knows such instances. We hear men denounce the extravagance of women, while those very men spend on wine and cigars, on clubs and horses, twice what their wives spend on their toilet. If the wives are economical, the husbands perhaps urge them on to greater lavishness. "Why do you not dress like Mrs. So-and-so?" — "I can't afford it." — "But *I* can afford it;" and then, when the bills come in, the talk of extravagance recommences. At one time in Newport, that lady among the summer visitors who was reported to be Worth's best customer was also well known to be quite indifferent to society, and to go into it mainly to please her husband, whose social ambition was notorious.

It has often happened to me to serve in organizations where both sexes were represented, and where expenditures were to be made for business or pleasure. In these I have found, as a rule, that the women were more careful, or perhaps I should say more timid, than the men, less willing to risk anything: the bolder financial experiments came from the men, as one might expect. In talking the other day with the secretary of an important educational enterprise, conducted by women, I was sur-

prised to find that it was cramped for money, though large subscriptions were said to have been made to it. On inquiry it appeared that these ladies, having pledged themselves for four years, had divided the amount received into four parts, and were resolutely limiting themselves, for the first year, to one quarter part of what had been subscribed. No board of men would have done so. Any board of men would have allowed far more than a quarter of the sum for the first year's expenditures, justly reasoning that if the enterprise began well it would command public confidence, and bring in additional subscriptions as time went on. I would appeal to any one whose experience has been in joint associations of men and women, whether this is not a fair statement of the difference between their ways of working. It does not prove that women are more honest than men, but that their education or their nature makes them more cautious in expenditure.

The habits of society make the dress of a fashionable woman far more expensive than that of a man of fashion. Formerly it was not so; and, so long as it was not so, the extravagance of men in this respect quite equalled that of women. It now takes other forms, but the habit is the same. The waiters at any fashionable restaurant will tell you that what is

a cheap dinner for a man would be a dear dinner for a woman. Yet after all, the test is not in any particular class of expenditures, but in the business-like habit. Men are of course more business-like in large combinations, for they are more used to them; but for the small details of daily economy women are more watchful. The cases where women ruin their husbands by extravagance are exceptional. As a rule, the men are the bread-winners; but the careful saving and managing and contriving come from the women.

GREATER INCLUDES LESS

I was once at a little musical party in New York, where several accomplished amateur singers were present, and with them the eminent professional, Miss Adelaide Phillipps. The amateurs were first called on. Each chose some difficult operatic passage, and sang her best. When it came to the great opera-singer's turn, instead of exhibiting her ability to eclipse those rivals on her own ground, she simply seated herself at the piano, and sang "Kathleen Mavourneen" with such thrilling sweetness that the young Irish girl who was setting the supper-table in the next room forgot all her plates and teaspoons, threw herself into a chair, put her apron over her face, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

All the training of Adelaide Phillipps — her magnificent voice, her stage experience, her skill in effects, her power of expression — went into the performance of that simple song. The greater included the less. And thus all the intellectual and practical training that any woman can have, all her public action and her active career, will make her, if she be a true woman, more admirable as a wife, a mother, and a friend. The greater includes the less for her also.

Of course this is a statement of general facts and tendencies. There must be among women, as among men, an endless variety of individual temperaments. There will always be plenty whose career will illustrate the infirmities of genius, and whom no training can convince that two and two make four. But the general fact is sure. As no sensible man would seriously prefer for a wife a Hindoo or Tahitian woman rather than one bred in England or America, so every further advantage of education or opportunity will only improve, not impair, the true womanly type.

Lucy Stone once said, "Woman's nature was stamped and sealed by the Almighty, and there is no danger of her unsexing herself while his eye watches her." Margaret Fuller said, "One hour of love will teach a woman more of her

true relations than all your philosophizing." These were the testimony of women who had studied Greek, and were only the more womanly for the study. They are worth the opinions of a million half-developed beings like the Duchess de Fontanges, who was described as being "as beautiful as an angel and as silly as a goose." The greater includes the less. Your view from the mountain-side may be very pretty, but she who has taken one step higher commands your view and her own also. It was no dreamy recluse, but the accomplished and experienced Stendhal, who wrote, "The joys of the gay world do not count for much with happy women." [1]

If a highly educated man is incapable and unpractical, we do not say that he is educated too well, but not well enough. He ought to know what he knows, and other things also. Never yet did I see a woman too well educated to be a wife and a mother; but I know multitudes who deplore, or have reason to deplore, every day of their lives, the untrained and unfurnished minds that are so ill-prepared for these sacred duties. Every step towards equalizing the opportunities of men and women meets with resistance, of course; but every step, as it is accomplished,

[1] *De l'Amour*, par de Stendhal (Henri Beyle): "Les plaisirs du grand monde n'en sont pas pour les femmes heureuses," p. 189.

leaves men still men, and women still women. And as we who heard Adelaide Phillipps felt that she had never had a better tribute to her musical genius than this young Irish girl's tears, so the true woman will feel that all her college training for instance, if she has it, may have been well invested, even for the sake of the baby on her knee. And it is to be remembered, after all, that each human being lives to unfold his or her own powers, and do his or her own duties first, and that neither woman nor man has the right to accept a merely secondary and subordinate life. A noble woman must be a noble human being; and the most sacred special duties, as of wife or mother, are all included in this, as the greater includes the less.

A COPARTNERSHIP

Marriage, considered merely in its financial and business relations, may be regarded as a permanent copartnership.

Now, in an ordinary copartnership there is very often a complete division of labor among the partners. If they manufacture locomotive-engines, for instance, one partner perhaps superintends the works, another attends to mechanical inventions and improvements, another travels for orders, another conducts the correspondence, another receives and pays out the money. The latter is not necessarily the

head of the firm. Perhaps his place could be more easily filled than some of the other posts. Nevertheless, more money passes through his hands than through those of all the others put together. Now, should he, at the year's end, call together the inventor and the superintendent and the traveller and the correspondent, and say to them, "I have earned all this money this year, but I will generously give you some of it," — he would be considered simply impertinent, and would hardly have a chance to repeat the offence the year after.

Yet precisely what would be called folly in this business partnership is constantly done by men in the copartnership of marriage, and is there called "common sense" and "social science" and "political economy."

For instance, a farmer works himself half to death in the hayfield, and his wife meanwhile is working herself wholly to death in the dairy. The neighbors come in to sympathize after her demise; and during the few months' interval before his second marriage they say approvingly, "He was always a generous man to his folks! He was a good provider!" But where was the room for generosity, any more than the member of any other firm is to be called generous, when he keeps the books, receipts the bills, and divides the money?

In case of the farming business, the share of the wife is so direct and unmistakable that it can hardly be evaded. If anything is earned by the farm, she does her distinct and important share of the earning. But it is not necessary that she should do even that, to make her, by all the rules of justice, an equal partner, entitled to her full share of the financial proceeds.

Let us suppose an ordinary case. Two young people are married, and begin life together. Let us suppose them equally poor, equally capable, equally conscientious, equally healthy. They have children. Those children must be supported by the earning of money abroad, by attendance and care at home. If it requires patience and labor to do the outside work, no less is required inside. The duties of the household are as hard as the duties of the shop or office. If the wife took her husband's work for a day, she would probably be glad to return to her own. So would the husband if he undertook hers. Their duties are ordinarily as distinct and as equal as those of two partners in any other copartnership. It so happens that the outdoor partner has the handling of the money; but does that give him a right to claim it as his exclusive earnings? No more than in any other business operation.

He earned the money for the children and

the household. She disbursed it for the children and the household. The very laws of nature, by giving her the children to bear and rear, absolve her from the duty of their support, so long as he is alive who was left free by nature for that purpose. Her task on the average is as hard as his: nay, a portion of it is so especially hard that it is distinguished from all others by the name "labor." If it does not earn money, it is because it is not to be measured in money, while it exists, — nor to be replaced by money, if lost. If a business man loses his partner, he can obtain another: and a man, no doubt, may take a second wife; but he cannot procure for his children a second mother. Indeed, it is a palpable insult to the whole relation of husband and wife when one compares it, even in a financial light, to that of business partners. It is only because a constant effort is made to degrade the practical position of woman below even this standard of comparison, that it becomes her duty to claim for herself at least as much as this.

There was a tradition in a town where I once lived, that a certain Quaker, who had married a fortune, was once heard to repel his wife, who had asked him for money in a public place, with the response, "Rachel, where is that ninepence I gave thee yesterday?" When I read

in "Scribner's Monthly" an article deriding the right to representation of the Massachusetts women who pay two millions of tax on one hundred and thirty-two million dollars of property, — asserting that they produced nothing of it; that it was only "men who produced this wealth, and bestowed it upon these women;" that it was "all drawn from land and sea by the hands of men whose largess testifies alike of their love and their munificence," — I must say that I am reminded of Rachel's ninepence.

ONE RESPONSIBLE HEAD

When we look through any business directory, there seem to be almost as many copartnerships as single dealers; and three quarters of these copartnerships appear to consist of precisely two persons, no more, no less. These partners are, in the eye of the law, equal. It is not found necessary, under the law, to make a general provision that in each case one partner should be supreme and the other subordinate. In many cases, by the terms of the copartnership there are limitations on one side and special privileges on the other, — marriage settlements, as it were; but the general law of copartnership is based on the presumption of equality. It would be considered infinitely absurd to require that, as the general rule, one party or the

other should be in a state of *coverture*, during which the very being and existence of the one should be suspended, or entirely merged and incorporated into that of the other.

And yet this requirement, which would be an admitted absurdity in the case of two business partners, is precisely that which the English common law still lays down in case of husband and wife. The words which I employed to describe it, in the preceding sentence, are the very phrases in which Blackstone describes the legal position of women. And though the English common law has been, in this respect, greatly modified and superseded by statute law; yet, when it comes to an argument on woman suffrage, it is constantly this same tradition to which men and even women habitually appeal, — the necessity of a single head to the domestic partnership, and the necessity that the husband should be that head. This is especially true of English men and women; but it is true of Americans as well. Nobody has stated it more tersely than Fitzjames Stephen, in his "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" (p. 216), when arguing against Mr. Mill's view of the equality of the sexes.

"Marriage is a contract, one of the principal objects in which is the government of a family.

"This government must be vested, either by law

or by contract, in the hands of one of the two married persons."

[Then follow some collateral points, not bearing on the present question.]

"Therefore if marriage is to be permanent, the government of the family must be put by law and by morals into the hands of the husband, for no one proposes to give it to the wife."

This argument he calls "as clear as that of a proposition in Euclid." He thinks that the business of life can be carried on by no other method. How is it, then, that when we come to what is called technically and especially the "business" of every day, this whole fine-spun theory is disregarded, and men come together in partnership on the basis of equality?

Nobody is farther than I from regarding marriage as a mere business partnership. But it is to be observed that the points wherein it differs from a merely mercantile connection are points that should make equality more easy, not more difficult. The tie between two ordinary business partners is merely one of interest: it is based on no sentiments, sealed by no solemn pledge, enriched by no home associations, cemented by no new generation of young life. If a relation like this is found to work well on terms of equality, — so well that a large

part of the business of the world is done by it, — is it not absurd to suppose that the same equal relation cannot exist in the married partnership of husband and wife? And if law, custom, society, all recognize this fact of equality in the one case, why, in the name of common-sense, should they not equally recognize it in the other?

And, again, it may often be far easier to assign a sphere to each partner in marriage than in business; and therefore the double headship of a family will involve less need of collision. In nine cases out of ten, the external support of the family will devolve upon the husband, unquestioned by the wife; and its internal economy upon the wife, unquestioned by the husband. No voluntary distribution of powers and duties between business partners can work so naturally, on the whole, as this simple and easy demarcation, with which the claim of suffrage makes no necessary interference. It may require angry discussion to decide which of two business partners shall buy, and which shall sell; which shall keep the books, and which do the active work, and so on; but all this is usually settled in married life by the natural order of things. Even in regard to the management of children, where collision is likely to come, if anywhere, it can commonly be settled by that

happy formula of Jean Paul's, that the mother usually supplies the commas and the semicolons in the child's book of life, and the father the colons and periods. And as to matters in general, the simple and practical rule, that each question that arises should be decided by that partner who has personally most at stake in it, will, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred, carry the domestic partnership through without shipwreck. Those who cannot meet the hundredth case by mutual forbearance are in a condition of shipwreck already.

ASKING FOR MONEY

One of the very best wives and mothers I have ever known once said to me, that, whenever her daughters should be married, she should stipulate in their behalf with their husbands for a regular sum of money to be paid them, at certain intervals, for their personal expenditures. Whether this sum was to be larger or smaller, was a matter of secondary importance, — that must depend on the income, and the style of living; but the essential thing was, that it should come to the wife regularly, so that she should no more have to make a special request for it than her husband would have to ask her for a dinner. This lady's own husband was, as I happened to know, of a most generous dis-

position, was devotedly attached to her, and denied her nothing. She herself was a most accurate and careful manager. There was everything in the household to make the financial arrangements flow smoothly. Yet she said to me, "I suppose no man can possibly understand how a sensitive woman shrinks from *asking* for money. If I can prevent it, my daughters shall never have to ask for it. If they do their duty as wives and mothers they have a right to their share of the joint income, within reasonable limits; for certainly no money could buy the services they render. Moreover, they have a right to a share in determining what those reasonable limits are."

Now, it so happened that I had myself gone through an experience which enabled me perfectly to comprehend this feeling. In early life I was for a time in the employ of one of my relatives, who paid me a fair salary but at no definite periods: I was at liberty to ask him for money up to a certain amount whenever I needed it. This seemed to me, in advance, a most agreeable arrangement; but I found it quite otherwise. It proved to be very disagreeable to apply for money: it made every dollar seem a special favor; it brought up all kinds of misgivings, as to whether he could spare it without inconvenience, whether he really thought

my services worth it, and so on. My employer was a thoroughly upright and noble man, and I was much attached to him. I do not know that he ever refused or demurred when I made my request. The annoyance was simply in the process of asking; and this became so great, that I often underwent serious inconvenience rather than do it. Finally, at the year's end, I surprised my relative very much by saying that I would accept, if necessary, a lower salary, on condition that it should be paid on regular days, and as a matter of business. The wish was at once granted, without the reduction; and he probably never knew what a relief it was to me.

Now, if a young man is liable to feel this pride and reluctance toward an employer, even when a kinsman, it is easy to understand how many women may feel the same, even in regard to a husband. And I fancy that those who feel it most are often the most conscientious and high-minded women. It is unreasonable to say of such persons, "Too sensitive! Too fastidious!" For it is just this quality of finer sensitiveness which men affect to prize in a woman, and wish to protect at all hazards. The very fact that a husband is generous; the very fact that his income is limited, — these may bring in conscience and gratitude to increase the re-

straining influence of pride, and make the wife less willing to ask money of such a husband than if he were a rich man or a mean one. The only dignified position in which a man can place his wife is to treat her at least as well as he would treat a housekeeper, and give her the comfort of a perfectly clear and definite arrangement as to money matters. She will not then be under the necessity of nerving herself to solicit from him as a favor what she really needs and has a right to spend. Nor will she be torturing herself, on the other side, with the secret fear lest she has asked too much and more than they can really spare. She will, in short, be in the position of a woman and a wife, not of a child or a toy.

I have carefully avoided using the word "allowance" in what has been said, because that word seems to imply the untrue and mean assumption that the money is all the husband's to give or withhold as he will. Yet I have heard this sort of phrase from men who were living on a wife's property or a wife's earnings; from men who nominally kept boarding-houses, working a little, while their wives worked hard, — or from farmers, who worked hard, and made their wives work harder. Even in cases where the wife has no direct part in the money-making, the indirect part she performs, if she takes

faithful charge of her household, is so essential, so beyond all compensation in money, that it is an utter shame and impertinence in the husband when he speaks of "giving" money to his wife as if it were an act of favor. It is no more an act of favor than when the business manager of a firm pays out money to the unseen partner who directs the indoor business or runs the machinery. Be the joint income more or less, the wife has a claim to her honorable share, and that as a matter of right, without the daily ignominy of sending in a petition for it.

WOMANHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD

I always groan in spirit when any advocate of woman suffrage, carried away by zeal, says anything disrespectful about the nursery. It is contrary to the general tone of feeling among reformers, I am sure, to speak of this priceless institution as a trivial or degrading sphere, unworthy the emancipated woman. It is rarely that anybody speaks in this way; but a single such utterance hinders progress more than any arguments of the enemy. For every thoughtful person sees that the cares of motherhood, though not the whole duty of woman, are an essential part of that duty, wherever they occur; and that no theory of womanly life is good for

anything which undertakes to leave out the cradle. Even her school education is based on this fact, were it only on Stendhal's theory that the sons of a woman who reads Gibbon and Schiller will be more likely to show talent than those of one who only tells her beads and reads Mme. de Genlis. And so clearly is this understood among us, that, when we ask for suffrage for woman, it is almost always claimed that she needs it for the sake of her children. To secure her in her right to them; to give her a voice in their education; to give her a vote in the government beneath which they are to live, — these points are seldom omitted in our statement of her claims. Anything else would be an error.

But there is an error at the other extreme, which is still greater. A woman should no more merge herself in her child than in her husband. Yet we often hear that she should do just this. What is all the public sphere of woman, it is said, — what good can she do by all her speaking and writing and action, — compared with that she does by properly training the soul of one child? It is not easy to see the logic of this claim.

For what service is that child to render in the universe, except that he, too, may write and speak and act for that which is good and true?

And if the mother foregoes all this that the child, in growing up, may simply do what the mother has left undone, the world gains nothing. In sacrificing her own work to her child's, moreover, she exchanges a present good for a prospective and merely possible one. If she does this through overwhelming love, we can hardly blame her; but she cannot justify it before reason and truth. Her child may die, and the service to mankind be done by neither. Her child may grow up with talents unlike hers, or with none at all; as the son of Howard was selfish, the son of Chesterfield a boor, and the son of Wordsworth in the last degree prosaic.

Or the special occasion when she might have done great good may have passed before her boy or girl grows up to do it. If Mrs. Child had refused to write "An Appeal for that Class of Americans called Africans," or Mrs. Stowe had laid aside "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or Florence Nightingale had declined to go to the Crimea, on the ground that a woman's true work was through the nursery, and they must all wait for that, the consequence would be that these things would have remained undone. The brave acts of the world must be performed when occasion offers, by the first brave soul who feels moved to do them, man or woman.

If all the children in all the nurseries are thereby helped to do other brave deeds when their turn comes, so much the better. But when a great opportunity offers for direct aid to the world, we have no right to transfer that work to other hands — not even to the hands of our own children. We must do the work, and train the children besides.

I am willing to admit, therefore, that the work of education, in any form, is as great as any other work; but I fail to see why it should be greater. Usefulness is usefulness: there is no reason why it should be postponed from generation to generation, or why it is better to rear a serviceable human being than to be one in person. Carry the theory consistently out: if each mother must simply rear her daughter that she in turn may rear somebody else, then from each generation the work will devolve upon a succeeding generation, so that it will be only the last woman who will personally do any service, except that of motherhood; and when her time comes it will be too late for any service at all.

If it be said, "But some of these children will be men, who are necessarily of more use than women," I deny the necessity. If it be said, "The children may be many, and the mother, who is but one, may well be sacrificed,"

it might be replied that, as one great act may be worth many smaller ones, so all the numerous children and grandchildren of a woman like Lucretia Mott may not collectively equal the usefulness of herself alone. If she, like many women, had held it her duty to renounce all other duties and interests from the time her motherhood began, I think that the world, and even her children, would have lost more than could ever have been gained by her more complete absorption in the nursery.

The true theory seems a very simple one. The very fact that during one half the years of a woman's average life she is made incapable of child-bearing shows that there are, even for the most prolific and devoted mothers, duties other than the maternal. Even during the most absorbing years of motherhood, the wisest women still try to keep up their interest in society, in literature, in the world's affairs — were it only for their children's sake. Multitudes of women will never be mothers; and those more fortunate may find even the usefulness of their motherhood surpassed by what they do in other ways. If maternal duties interfere in some degree with all other functions, the same is true, though in a far less degree, of those of a father. But there are those who combine both spheres. The German poet Wieland claimed to be the

parent of fourteen children and forty books; and who knows by which parentage he served the world the best?

A GERMAN POINT OF VIEW

Many Americans will remember the favorable impression made by Professor Christlieb of Germany, when he attended the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York some years ago. His writings, like his presence, show a most liberal spirit; and perhaps no man has ever presented the more advanced evangelical theology of Germany in so attractive a light. Yet I heard a story of him the other day, which either showed him in an aspect quite undesirable, or else gave an unpleasant view of the social position of women in Germany.

The story was to the effect that a young American student recently called on Professor Christlieb with a letter of introduction. The professor received him cordially, and soon entered into conversation about the United States. He praised the natural features of the country, and the enterprising spirit of our citizens, but expressed much solicitude about the future of the nation. On being asked his reasons, he frankly expressed his opinion that "the Spirit of Christ" was not here. Being still further pressed to illustrate his meaning, he gave, as

instances of this deficiency, not the Crédit Mobilier or the Tweed scandal, but such alarming facts as the following. He seriously declared that, on more than one occasion, he had heard an American married woman say to her husband, "Dear, will you bring me my shawl?" and the husband had brought it. He further had seen a husband return home at evening, and enter the parlor where his wife was sitting, — perhaps in the very best chair in the room, — and the wife not only did not go and get his dressing-gown and slippers, but she even remained seated, and left him to find a chair as he could. These things, as Professor Christlieb pointed out, suggested a serious deficiency of the spirit of Christ in the community.

With our American habits and interpretations, it is hard to see this matter just as the professor sees it. One would suppose that, if there is any meaning in the command, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," a little of such fulfilling might sometimes be good for the husband, as for the wife. And though it would undoubtedly be more pleasing to see every wife so eager to receive her husband that she would naturally spring from her chair and run to kiss him in the doorway, yet, where such devotion was wanting, it would be but fair to inquire which of

the two had done the more fatiguing day's work, and to whom the easy-chair justly belonged. The truth is, I suppose, that the good professor's remark indicated simply a "survival" in his mind, or in his social circle, of a barbarous tradition, under which the wife of a Mexican herdsman cannot eat at the table with her "lord and master," and the wife of a German professor must vacate the best armchair at his approach.

If so, it is not to be regretted that we in this country have outgrown a relation so unequal. Nor am I at all afraid that the great Teacher, who, pointing to the multitude for whom he was soon to die, said of them, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother," would have objected to any mutual and equal service between man and woman. If we assume that two human beings have immortal souls, there can be no want of dignity to either in serving the other. The greater equality of woman in America seems to be, on this reasoning, a proof of the presence not the absence, of the spirit of Christ; nor does Dr. Christlieb seem quite worthy of the beautiful name he bears, if he feels otherwise.

But if it is really true that a German professor has to cross the Atlantic to witness a phenomenon so very simple as that of a lover-

like husband bringing a shawl for his wife, I should say, Let the immigration from Germany be encouraged as much as possible, in order that even the most learned immigrants may discover something new.

CHILDLESS WOMEN

It has not always been regarded as a thing creditable to woman that she was the mother of the human race. On the contrary, the fact was often mentioned, in the Middle Ages, as a distinct proof of inferiority. The question was discussed in the mediæval Council of Maçon, and the position taken that woman was no more entitled to rank as human, because she brought forth men, than the garden-earth could take rank with the fruit and flowers it bore. The same view was revived by a Latin writer of 1595, on the thesis "*Mulieres non homines esse*," a French translation of which essay was printed under the title of "*Paradoxe sur les femmes*," in 1766. Napoleon Bonaparte used the same image, carrying it almost as far: —

"Woman is given to man that she may bear children. Woman is our property; we are not hers: because she produces children for us; we do not yield any to her: she is therefore our possession, as the fruit-tree is that of the gardener."

Even the fact of parentage, therefore, has been adroitly converted into a ground of inferiority for women; and this is ostensibly the reason why lineage has been reckoned, almost everywhere, through the male line only, ignoring the female; just as, in tracing the seed of some rare fruit, the gardener takes no genealogical account of the garden where it grew. This view is now seldom expressed in full force: but one remnant of it is to be found in the lingering impression, that, at any rate, a woman who is not a mother is of no account; as worthless as a fruitless garden or a barren fruit-tree. Created only for a certain object, she is of course valueless unless that object be fulfilled.

But the race must have fathers as well as mothers; and if we look for evidence of public service in great men, it certainly does not always lie in leaving children to the republic. On the contrary, the rule has rather seemed to be, that the most eminent men have left their bequest of service in any form rather than in that of a great family. Recent inquiries into the matter have brought out some remarkable facts in this regard.

As a rule, there exist no living descendants in the male line from the great authors, artists, statesmen, soldiers, of England. It is stated that there is not one such descendant of Chau-

cer, Shakespeare, Spenser, Butler, Dryden, Pope, Cowper, Goldsmith, Scott, Byron, or Moore; not one of Drake, Cromwell, Monk, Marlborough, Peterborough, or Nelson; not one of Strafford, Ormond, or Clarendon; not one of Addison, Swift, or Johnson; not one of Walpole, Bolingbroke, Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Grattan, or Canning; not one of Bacon, Locke, Newton, or Davy; not one of Hume, Gibbon, or Macaulay; not one of Hogarth or Reynolds; not one of Garrick, John Kemble, or Edmund Kean. It would be easy to make a similar American list, beginning with Washington, of whom it was said that "Providence made him childless that his country might call him Father."

Now, however we may regret that these great men have left little or no posterity, it does not occur to any one as affording any serious drawback upon their service to their nation. Certainly it does not occur to us that they would have been more useful had they left children to the world, but rendered it no other service. Lord Bacon says that "he that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men;

which, both in affection and means, have married and endowed the public." And this is the view generally accepted, — that the public is in such cases rather the gainer than the loser, and has no right to complain.

Since, therefore, every child must have a father and a mother both, and neither will alone suffice, why should we thus heap gratitude on men who from preference or from necessity have remained childless, and yet habitually treat women as if they could render no service to their country except by giving it children? If it be folly and shame, as I think, to belittle and decry the dignity and worth of motherhood, as some are said to do, it is no less folly, and shame quite as great, to deny the grand and patriotic service of many women who have died and left no children among their mourners. Plato puts into the mouth of a woman, — the eloquent Diotima, in the "Banquet," — that, after all, we are more grateful to Homer and Hesiod for the children of their brain than if they had left human offspring.

THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO MOTHERS

From the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals we have now advanced to a similar society for the benefit of children. When shall we have a movement for the prevention of cruelty to mothers?

A Rhode Island lady, who had never taken any interest in the woman-suffrage movement, came to me in great indignation the other day, asking if it was true that under Rhode Island laws a husband might, by his last will, bequeath his child away from its mother, so that she might, if the guardian chose, never see it again. I said that it was undoubtedly true, and that such were still the laws in many States of the Union.

"But," she said, "it is an outrage. The husband may have been one of the weakest or worst men in the world; he may have persecuted his wife and children; he may have made the will in a moment of anger, and have neglected to alter it. At any rate, he is dead, and the mother is living. The guardian whom he appoints may turn out a very malicious man, and may take pleasure in torturing the mother; or he may bring up the children in a way their mother thinks ruinous for them. Why do not all the mothers cry out against such a law?"

"I wish they would," I said. "I have been trying a good many years to make them understand what the law is; but they do not. People who do not vote pay no attention to the laws until they suffer from them."

She went away protesting that she, at least, would not hold her tongue on the subject, and

I hope she will not. The actual text of the law to which she objected is as follows: —

"Every person authorized by law to make a will, except married women, shall have a right to appoint by his will a guardian or guardians for his children during their minority." [1]

There is not associated with this, in the statute, the slightest clause in favor of the mother; nor anything which could limit the power of the guardian by requiring deference to her wishes, although he could, in case of gross neglect or abuse, be removed by the court, and another guardian appointed. There is not a line of positive law to protect the mother. Now, in a case of absolute wrong, a single sentence of law is worth all the chivalrous courtesy this side of the Middle Ages.

It is idle to say that such laws are not executed. They are executed. I have had letters, too agonizing to print, expressing the sufferings of mothers under laws like these. There lies before me a letter, — not from Rhode Island, — written by a widowed mother who suffers daily tortures, even while in possession of her child, at the knowledge that it is not legally hers, but held only by the temporary permission of the guardian appointed under her husband's will. "I beg you," she says, "to take this will to the

[1] Gen. Statutes R. I., chap. 154. sect. 1.

hilltop, and urge law-makers in our next legislature to free the State record from the shameful story that no mother can control her child unless it is born out of wedlock."

"From the moment," she says, "when the will was read to me, I have made no effort to set it aside. I wait till God reveals his plans, so far as my own condition is concerned. But out of my keen comprehension of this great wrong, notwithstanding my submission for myself, my whole soul is stirred, — for my child, who is a little woman; for all women, that the laws may be changed which subject a true woman, a devoted wife, a faithful mother, to such mental agonies as I have endured, and shall endure till I die."

In a later letter she says, "I now have his [the guardian's] solemn promise that he will not remove her from my control. To some extent my sufferings are allayed; and yet never, till she arrives at the age of twenty-one, shall I fully trust." I wish that mothers who dwell in sheltered and happy homes would try to bring to their minds the condition of a mother whose possession of her only child rests upon the "promise" of a comparative stranger. We should get beyond the meaningless cry, "I have all the rights I want," if mothers could only remember that among these rights, in most

States of the Union, the right of a widowed mother to her child is not included.

By strenuous effort, the law on this point has in Massachusetts been gradually amended, till it now stands thus: The father is authorized to appoint a guardian by will; but the powers of this guardian do not entitle him to take the child from the mother.

"The guardian of a minor . . . shall have the custody and tuition of his ward; and the care and management of all his estate, except that the father of the minor, if living, and in case of his death the mother, they being respectively competent to transact their own business, shall be entitled to the custody of the person of the minor and the care of his education."[1]

Down to 1870 the cruel words "while she remains unmarried" followed the word "mother" in the above law. Until that time, the mother if remarried had no claim to the custody of her child, in case the guardian wished otherwise; and a very painful scene once took place in a Boston court-room, where children were forced away from their mother by the officers, under this statute, in spite of her tears and theirs; and this when no sort of personal charge had been made against her. This could not now happen in Massachusetts, but it might still

[1] Public Statutes, chap. 139, sect. 4.

happen in some other States. It is true that men are almost always better than their laws; but while a bad law remains on the statute-book it gives to any unscrupulous man the power to be as bad as the law.

V

SOCIETY

"Place the sexes in right relations of mutual respect, and a severe morality gives that essential charm to woman which educates all that is delicate, poetic, and self-sacrificing, breeds courtesy and learning, conversation and wit, in her rough mate; so that I have thought a sufficient measure of civilization is the influence of good women."—EMERSON, Society and Solitude, p. 21.

FOAM AND CURRENT

Sometimes, on the beach at Newport, I look at the gayly dressed ladies in their phaetons, and then at the foam which trembles on the breaking wave, or lies palpitating in creamy masses on the beach. It is as pretty as they, as light, as fresh, as delicate, as changing; and no doubt the graceful foam, if it thinks at all, fancies that it is the chief consummate product of the ocean, and that the main end of the vast currents of the mighty deep is to yield a few glittering bubbles like those. At least, this seems to me what many of the fair ladies think, as to themselves.

Here is a nation in which the most momentous social and political experiment ever tried

by man is being worked out, day by day. There is something ocean-like in the way in which the great currents of life, race, religion, temperament are here chafing with each other, safe from the storms through which all monarchical countries may yet have to pass. As these great currents heave, there are tossed up in every watering-place and every city in America, as on an ocean beach, certain pretty bubbles of foam; and each spot, we may suppose, counts its own bubbles brighter than those of its neighbors, and christens them "society."

It is an unceasing wonder to a thoughtful person, at any such resort, to see the unconscious way in which fashionable society accepts the foam, and ignores the currents. You hear people talk of "a position in society," "the influential circles in society," as if the position they mean were not liable to be shifted in a day; as if the essential influences in America were not mainly to be sought outside the world of fashion. In other countries it is very different. The circle of social caste, whose centre you touch in London, radiates to the farthest shores of the British empire; the upper class controls, not merely fashion, but government; it rules in country as well as city; genius and wealth are but its tributaries. Wherever it is not so, it is because England is so far Ameri-

canized. But in America the social prestige of the cities is nothing in the country; it is a matter of the pavement, of a three-mile radius.

Go to the farthest borders of England: there are still the "county families," and you meet servants in livery. On the other hand, in a little village in northern New Hampshire, my friend was visited in the evening by the landlady, who said that several of their "most fashionable ladies" had happened in, and she would like to show them her guest's bonnet. Then the different cities ignore each other: the rulers of select circles in New York may find themselves nobodies in Washington, while a Washington social passport counts for as little in New York. Boston and Philadelphia affect to ignore both; and St. Louis and San Francisco have their own standards. The utmost social prestige in America is local, provincial, a matter of the square inch: it is as if the foam of each particular beach along the seacoast were to call itself "society."

There is something pathetic, therefore, in the unwearied pains taken by ambitious women to establish a place in some little, local, transitory domain, to "bring out" their daughters for exhibition on a given evening, to form a circle for them, to marry them well. A dozen years hence the millionaires whose notice they

seek may be paupers, or these ladies may be dwelling in some other city, where the visiting cards will bear wholly different names. How idle to attempt to transport into American life the social traditions and delusions which require monarchy and primogeniture, and a standing army, to keep them up — and which cannot always hold their own in England, even with the aid of these!

Every woman, like every man, has a natural desire for influence; and if this instinct yearns, as it often should yearn, to take in more than her own family, she must seek it somewhere outside. I know women who bring to bear on the building-up of a frivolous social circle — frivolous, because it is not really brilliant, but only showy; not really gay, but only bored — talent and energy enough to influence the mind and thought of the nation, if only employed in some effective way. Who are the women of real influence in America? They are the school-teachers, through whose hands each successive American generation has to pass; they are those wives of public men who share their husbands' labor, and help mould their work; they are those women who, through their personal eloquence or through the press, are distinctly influencing the American people in its growth. The influence of such women is felt for good

or for evil in every page they print, every newspaper column they fill: the individual women may be unworthy their posts, but it is they who have got hold of the lever, and gone the right way to work. As American society is constituted, the largest "social success" that can be attained here is trivial and local; and you have to "make believe very hard," like that other imaginary Marchioness, to find in it any career worth mentioning. That is the foam, but these other women are dealing with the main currents.

IN SOCIETY

One sometimes hears from some lady the remark that very few people "in society" believe in any movement to enlarge the rights or duties of women. In a community of more marked social gradations than our own, this assertion, if true, might be very important; and even here it is worth considering, because it leads the way to a little social philosophy. Let us, for the sake of argument, begin by accepting the assumption that there is an inner circle, at least in our large cities, which claims to be "society," *par excellence.* What relation has this favored circle, if favored it be, to any movement relating to women?

It has, to begin with, the same relation that

"society" has to every movement of reform. The proportion of smiles and frowns bestowed from this quarter upon the woman-suffrage movement, for instance, is about that formerly bestowed upon the anti-slavery agitation: I see no great difference. In Boston, for example, the names contributed by "society" to the woman-suffrage festivals are about as numerous as those which used to be contributed to the anti-slavery bazaars; no more, no less. Indeed, they are very often the same names; and it has been curious to see, for nearly fifty years, how radical tendencies have predominated in some of the well-known Boston families, and conservative tendencies in others. The traits of blood seem to outlast successive series of special reforms. Be this as it may, it is safe to assume, that, as the anti-slavery movement prevailed with only a moderate amount of sanction from "our best society," the woman-suffrage agitation, which has at least an equal amount, has no reason to be discouraged.

On looking farther, we find that not reforms alone, but often most important and established institutions, exist and flourish with only incidental aid from those "in society." Take, for instance, the whole public school system of our larger cities. Grant that out of twenty ladies

"in society," taken at random, not more than one would personally approve of women's voting: it is doubtful whether even that proportion of them would personally favor the public school system so far as to submit their children, or at least their girls, to it. Yet the public schools flourish, and give a better training than most private schools, in spite of this inert practical resistance from those "in society." The natural inference would seem to be, that if an institution so well established as the public schools, and so generally recognized, can afford to be ignored by "society," then certainly a wholly new reform must expect no better fate.

As a matter of fact, I apprehend that what is called "society," in the sense of the more fastidious or exclusive social circle in any community, exists for one sole object,—the preservation of good manners and social refinements. For this purpose it is put very largely under the sway of women, who have, all the world over, a better instinct for these important things. It is true that "society" is apt to do even this duty very imperfectly, and often tolerates, and sometimes even cultivates, just the rudeness and discourtesy that it is set to cure. Nevertheless, this is its mission; but so soon as it steps beyond this, and attempts to claim any special weight outside the sphere of good

manners, it shows its weakness, and must yield to stronger forces.

One of these stronger forces is religion, which should train men and women to a far higher standard than "society" alone can teach. This standard should be embodied, theoretically, in the Christian Church; but unhappily "society" is too often stronger than this embodiment, and turns the church itself into a mere temple of fashion. Other opposing forces are known as science and common-sense, which is only science written in shorthand. On some of these various forces all reforms are based, the woman-suffrage reform among them. If it could really be shown that some limited social circle was opposed to this, then the moral would seem to be, "So much the worse for the social circle." It used to be thought in anti-slavery days that one of the most blessed results of that agitation was the education it gave to young men and women who would otherwise have merely grown up "in society," but were happily taken in hand by a stronger influence. It is Goethe who suggests, when discussing Hamlet in "Wilhelm Meister," that, if an oak be planted in a flower-pot, it will be worse in the end for the flower-pot than for the tree. And to those who watch, year after year, the young human seedlings planted "in society," the main point of interest lies in the

discovery which of these are likely to grow into oaks.

But the truth is that the very use of the word "society" in this sense is narrow and misleading. We Americans are fortunate enough to live in a larger society, where no conventional position or family traditions exert an influence that is to be in the least degree compared with the influence secured by education, energy, and character. No matter how fastidious the social circle, one is constantly struck with the limitations of its influence, and with the little power exerted by its members as compared with that which may easily be wielded by tongue and pen. No merely fashionable woman in New York, for instance, has a position sufficiently important to be called influential compared with that of a woman who can speak in public so as to command hearers, or can write so as to secure readers. To be at the head of a normal school, or to be a professor in a college where co-education prevails, is to have a sway over the destinies of America which reduces all mere "social position" to a matter of cards and compliments and page's buttons.

THE BATTLE OF THE CARDS

The great winter's contest of the visiting-cards recommences at the end of every autumn. Suspended during the summer, or only renewed at Newport and such thoroughbred and thoroughly sophisticated haunts, it will set in with fury in the habitable regions of our cities before the snow falls. Now will the atmosphere of certain streets and squares be darkened — or whitened — at the appointed hour by the shower of pasteboard transmitted from dainty kid-gloved hands to the cotton-gloved hands of "John," and destined through him to reach the possibly gloveless hands of some other John, who stands obsequious in the doorway. Now will every lady, after John has slammed the door, drive happily on to some other door, rearranging, as she goes, her display of cards, laid as if for a game on the opposite seat of her carriage, and dealt perhaps in four suits, — her own cards, her daughters', her husband's, her "Mr. and Mrs." cards, and who knows how many more? With all this ammunition, what a very *mitrailleuse* of good society she becomes; what an accumulation of polite attentions she may discharge at any door! That one well-appointed woman, as she sits in her carriage, represents the total visiting power of self, husband, daughters, and possibly a son or two beside. She has

all their counterfeit presentments in her hands. How happy she is! and how happy will the others be on her return, to think that dear mamma has disposed of so many dear, beloved, tiresome, social foes that morning! It will be three months at least, they think, before the A's and the B's and the C's will have to be "done" again.

Ah! but who knows how soon these fatiguing letters of the alphabet, rallying to the defence, will come, pasteboard in hand, to return the onset? In this contest, fair ladies, "there are blows to take as well as blows to give," in the words of the immortal Webster. Some day, on returning, you will find a half-dozen cards on your own table that will undo all this morning's work, and send you forth on the warpath again. Is it not like a campaign? It is from this subtle military analogy, doubtless, that when gentlemen happen to quarrel, in the very best society, they exchange cards as preliminary to a duel; and that, when French journalists fight, all other French journalists show their sympathy for the survivor by sending him their cards. When we see, therefore, these heroic ladies riding forth in the social battle's magnificently stern array, our hearts render them the homage due to the brave. When we consider how complex their military equipment has grown, we

fancy each of these self-devoted mothers to be an Arnold Winkelried, receiving in her martyr-breast the points of a dozen different cards, and shouting, "Make way for liberty!" For is it not securing liberty to have cleared off a dozen calls from your list, and found nobody at home?

If this sort of thing goes on, who can tell where the paper warfare shall end? If ladies may leave cards for their husbands, who are never seen out of Wall Street, except when they are seen at their clubs; or for their sons, who never forsake their billiards or their books, — why can they not also leave them for their ancestors, or for their remotest posterity? Who knows but people may yet drop cards in the names of the grandchildren whom they only wish for, or may reconcile hereditary feuds by interchanging pasteboard in behalf of two hostile grandparents who died half a century ago?

And there is another social observance in which the introduction of the card system may yet be destined to save much labor, — the attendance on fashionable churches. Already, it is said, a family may sometimes reconcile devout observance with a late breakfast, by stationing the family carriage near the church-door — empty. Really, it would not be a much emptier observance to send the cards alone by

the footman; and doubtless in the progress of civilization we shall yet reach that point. It will have many advantages. The *effete* of society, as some cruel satirist has called them, may then send their orisons on pasteboard to as many different shrines as they approve; thus insuring their souls, as it were, at several different offices. Church architecture may be simplified, for it will require nothing but a card-basket. The clergyman will celebrate his solemn ritual, and will then look in that convenient receptacle for the names of his fellow-worshippers, as a fine lady, after her "reception," looks over the cards her footman hands her, to know which of her dear friends she has been welcoming. Religion, as well as social proprieties, will glide smoothly over a surface of glazed pasteboard; and it will be only very humble Christians, indeed, who will do their worshipping in person, and will hold to the worn-out and obsolete practice of "No Cards."

SOME WORKING-WOMEN

It is almost a stereotyped remark, that the women of the more fashionable and worldly class, in America, are indolent, idle, incapable, and live feeble and lazy lives. It has always seemed to me that, on the contrary, they are compelled, by the very circumstances of their situation, to

lead very laborious lives, requiring great strength and energy. Whether many of their pursuits are frivolous, is a different question; but that they are arduous, I do not see how any one can doubt. I think it can be easily shown that the common charges against American fashionable women do not hold against the class I describe.

There is, for instance, the charge of evading the cares of housekeeping, and of preferring a boarding-house or hotel. But no woman with high aims in the world of fashion can afford to relieve herself from household cares in this way, except as an exceptional or occasional thing. She must keep house in order to have entertainments, to form a circle, to secure a position. The law of give and take is as absolute in society as in business; and the very first essential to social position in our larger cities is a household and a hospitality of one's own. It is far more practicable for a family of high rank in England to live temporarily in lodgings in London, than for any family with social aspirations to do the same in New York. The married woman who seeks a position in the world of society must, therefore, keep house.

And, with housekeeping, there comes at once to the American woman a world of care far beyond that of her European sisters.

Abroad, everything in domestic life is systematized; and services of any grade, up to that of housekeeper or steward, can be secured for money, and for a moderate amount of that. The mere amount of money might not trouble the American woman; but where to get the service? Such a thing as a trained housekeeper, who can undertake, at any salary, to take the work off the shoulders of the lady of the house, — such a thing America hardly affords. Without this, the multiplication of servants only increaseth sorrow; the servants themselves are often but an undisciplined mob, and the lady of the house is like a general attempting to drill his whole command personally, without the aid of a staff-officer or so much as a sergeant. For an occasional grand entertainment, she can, perhaps, import a special force; some fashionable sexton can arrange her invitations, and some genteel caterer her supper. But for the daily routine of the household — guests, children, door-bell, equipage — there is one vast, constant toil every day; and the woman who would have these things done well must give her own orders, and discipline her own retinue. The husband may have no "business," his wealth may supersede the necessity of all toil beyond daily billiards; but for the wife wealth means business, and the

more complete the social triumph, the more overwhelming the daily toil.

For instance, I know a fair woman in an Atlantic city who is at the head of a household including six children and nine servants. The whole domestic management is placed absolutely in her hands: she engages or dismisses every person employed, incurs every expense, makes every purchase, and keeps all the accounts; her husband only ordering the fuel, directing the affairs of the stable, and drawing checks for the bills. Every hour of her morning is systematically appropriated to these things. Among other things, she has to provide for nine meals a day; in dining-room, kitchen, and nursery, three each. Then she has to plan her social duties, and to drive out, exquisitely dressed, to make her calls. Then there are constantly dinner-parties and evening entertainments; she reads a little, and takes lessons in one or two languages. Meanwhile her husband has for daily occupation his books, his club, and the above-mentioned light and easy share in the cares of the household. Many men in his position do not even keep an account of personal expenditures.

There is nothing exceptional in this lady's case, except that the work may be better done than usual: the husband could not well con-

tribute more than his present share without hurting domestic discipline; nor does the wife do all this from pleasure, but in a manner from necessity. It is the condition of her social position: to change it, she must withdraw herself from her social world. A few improvements, such as "family hotels," are doing something to relieve this class to whom luxury means labor. The great undercurrent which is sweeping us all toward some form of associated life is as obvious in this new improvement in housekeeping, as in coöperative stores or trades-unions; but it will nevertheless be long before the "women of society" in America can be anything but a hard-working class.

The question is not whether such a life as I have described is the ideal life. My point is that it is, at any rate, a life demanding far more of energy and toil, at least in America, than the men of the same class are called upon to exhibit. There is growing up a class of men of leisure in America; but there are no women of leisure in the same circle. They hold their social position on condition of "an establishment," and an establishment makes them working-women. One result is the constant exodus of this class to Europe, where domestic life is just now easier. Another consequence is that you hear woman suffrage denounced by women

of this class, not on the ground that it involves any harder work than they already do, but on the ground that they have work enough already, and will not bear the suggestion of any more.

THE EMPIRE OF MANNERS

I was present at a lively discourse, administered by a young lady just from Europe to a veteran politician. "It is of very little consequence," she said, "what kind of men you send out as foreign ministers. The thing of real importance is that they should have the right kind of wives. Any man can sign a treaty, I suppose, if you tell him what kind of treaty it must be. But all his social relations with the nations to which you send him will depend on his wife." There was some truth, certainly, in this audacious conclusion. It reminded me of the saying of a modern thinker, "The only empire freely conceded to women is that of manners, — but it is worth all the rest put together."

Every one instinctively feels that the graces and amenities of life must be largely under the direction of women. The fact that this feeling has been carried too far, and has led to the dwarfing of women's intellect, must not lead to a rejection of this important social sphere. It is too strong a power to be ignored. George

Eliot says well that "the commonest man, who has his ounce of sense and feeling, is conscious of the difference between a lovely, delicate woman, and a coarse one. Even a dog feels a difference in their presence." At a summer resort, for instance, one sees women who may be intellectually very ignorant and narrow, yet whose mere manners give them a social power which the highest intellects might envy. To lend joy and grace to all one's little world of friendship; to make one's house a place which every guest enters with eagerness, and leaves with reluctance; to lend encouragement to the timid, and ease to the awkward; to repress violence, restrain egotism, and make even controversy courteous, — these belong to the empire of woman. It is a sphere so important and so beautiful, that even courage and self-devotion seem not quite enough, without the addition of this supremest charm.

This courtesy is so far from implying falsehood, that its very best basis is perfect simplicity. Given a naturally sensitive organization, a loving spirit, and the early influence of a refined home, and the foundation of fine manners is secured. A person so favored may be reared in a log hut, and may pass easily into a palace; the few needful conventionalities are so readily acquired. But I think it is a mistake to tell

children, as we sometimes do, that simplicity and a kind heart are absolutely all that are needful in the way of manners. There are persons in whom simplicity and kindness are inborn. and who yet never attain to good manners for want of refined perceptions. And it is astonishing how much refinement alone can do, even if it be not very genuine or very full of heart, to smooth the paths and make social life attractive.

All the acute observers have recognized the difference between the highest standard, which is nature's, and that next to the highest, which is art's. George Eliot speaks of that fine polish which is "the expensive substitute for simplicity," and Tennyson says of manners, —

> "Kind nature's are the best: those next to best
> That fit us like a nature second-hand;
> Which are indeed the manners of the great."

In our own national history we have learned to recognize that the personal demeanor of women may be a social and political force. The slave-power owed much of its prolonged control at Washington, and the larger part of its favor in Europe, to the fact that the manners of Southern women had been more sedulously trained than those of Northern women. Even at this moment, one may see at any watering-place that the relative social influence of differ-

ent cities does not depend upon the intellectual training of their women, so much as on the manners. And, even if this is very unreasonable, the remedy would seem to be, not to go about lecturing on the intrinsic superiority of the Muses to the Graces, but to pay due homage at all the shrines.

It is a great deal to ask of reformers, especially, that they should be ornamental as well as useful; and I would by no means indorse the views of a lady who once told me that she was ready to adopt the most radical views of the women-reformers if she could see one well-dressed woman who accepted them. The place where we should draw the line between independence and deference, between essentials and non-essentials, between great ideas and little courtesies, will probably never be determined — except by actual examples. Yet it is safe to fall back on Miss Edgeworth's maxim in "Helen," that "Every one who makes goodness disagreeable commits high treason against virtue." And it is not a pleasant result of our good deeds, that others should be immediately driven into bad deeds by the burning desire to be unlike us.

GIRLSTEROUSNESS

They tell the story of a little boy, a young scion of the house of Beecher, that, on being rebuked for some noisy proceeding, in which his little sister had also shared, he claimed that she also should be included in the indictment. "If a boy makes too much noise," he said, "you tell him he must n't be boisterous. Well, then, when a girl makes just as much noise, you ought to tell her not to be so *girlsterous*."

I think that we should accept, with a sense of gratitude, this addition to the language. It supplies a name for a special phase of feminine demeanor, inevitably brought out of modern womanhood. Any transitional state of society develops some evil with the good. Good results are unquestionably proceeding from the greater freedom now allowed to women. The drawback is that we are developing, here and now, more of "girlsterousness" than is apt to be seen in less enlightened countries.

The more complete the subjection of woman, the more "subdued" in every sense she is. The typical woman of savage life is, at least in youth, gentle, shy, retiring, timid. A Bedouin woman is modest and humble; an Indian girl has a voice "gentle and low." The utmost stretch of the imagination cannot picture either of them as "girlsterous." That perilous qual-

ity can only come as woman is educated, self-respecting, emancipated. "Girlsterousness" is the excess attendant on that virtue, the shadow which accompanies that light. It is more visible in England than in France, in America than in England.

It is to be observed, that, if a girl wishes to be noisy, she can be as noisy as anybody. Her noise, if less clamorous, is more shrill and penetrating. The shrieks of schoolgirls, playing in the yard at recess-time, seem to drown the voices of the boys. As you enter an evening party, it is the women's tones you hear most conspicuously. There is no defect in the organ, but at least an adequate vigor. In travelling by rail, when sitting near some rather underbred party of youths and damsels, I have commonly noticed that the girls were the noisiest. The young men appeared more regardful of public opinion, and looked round with solicitude, lest they should attract too much attention. It is "girlsterousness" that dashes straight on, regardless of all observers.

Of course reformers exhibit their full share of this undesirable quality. Where the emancipation of women is much discussed in any circle, some young girls will put it in practice gracefully and with dignity, others rudely. Yet even the rudeness may be but a temporary

phase, and at last end well. When women were being first trained as physicians, years ago, I remember a young girl who came from a Southern State to a Northern city, and attended the medical lectures. Having secured her lecture-tickets, she also bought season-tickets to the theatre and to the pistol-gallery, laid in a box of cigars, and began her professional training. If she meant it as a satire on the pursuits of the young gentlemen around her, it was not without point. But it was, I suppose, a clear case of "girlsterousness;" and I dare say that she sowed her wild oats much more innocently than many of her male contemporaries, and that she has long since become a sedate matron. But I certainly cannot commend her as a model.

Yet I must resolutely deny that any sort of hoydenishness or indecorum is an especial characteristic of radicals, or even "provincials," as a class. Some of the fine ladies who would be most horrified at the "girlsterousness" of this young maiden would themselves smoke their cigarettes in much worse company, morally speaking, than she ever tolerated. And, so far as manners are concerned, I am bound to say that the worst cases of rudeness and ill-breeding that have ever come to my knowledge have not occurred in the "rural districts," or among the lower ten thousand, but in those

circles of America where the whole aim in life might seem to be the cultivation of its elegances.

And what confirms me in the fear that the most profound and serious types of this disease are not to be found in the wildcat regions is the fact that so much of it is transplanted to Europe, among those who have the money to travel. It is there described broadly as "Americanism;" and, so surely as any peculiarly shrill group is heard coming through a European picture-gallery, it is straightway classed by all observers as belonging to the great Republic. If the observers are enamoured at sight with the beauty of the young ladies of the party, they excuse the voices;

> "Strange or wild, or madly gay,
> They call it only pretty Fanny's way."

But other observers are more apt to call it only Columbia's way; and if they had ever heard the word "girlsterousness," they would use that too.

Emerson says, "A gentleman makes no noise; a lady is serene." If we Americans often violate this perfect maxim of good manners, it is something that America has, at least, furnished the maxim. And, between Emerson and "girlsterousness," our courteous philosopher may yet carry the day.

ARE WOMEN NATURAL ARISTOCRATS?

A clergyman's wife in England has lately set on foot a reform movement in respect to dress; and, like many English reformers, she aims chiefly to elevate the morals and manners of the lower classes, without much reference to her own social equals. She proposes that "no servant, under pain of dismissal, shall wear flowers, feathers, brooches, buckles or clasps, earrings, lockets, neck-ribbons, velvets, kid gloves, parasols, sashes, jackets, or trimming of any kind on dresses, and, above all, no crinoline; no pads to be worn, or frisettes, or *chignons*, or hair-ribbons. The dress is to be gored and made just to touch the ground, and the hair to be drawn closely to the head, under a round white cap, without trimming of any kind. The same system of dress is recommended for Sunday-school girls, schoolmistresses, church-singers, and the lower orders generally."

The remark is obvious, that in this country such a course of discipline would involve the mistress, not the maid, in the "pain of dismissal." The American clergyman and clergyman's wife who should even "recommend" such a costume to a schoolmistress, church-singer, or Sunday-school girl, — to say nothing of the rest of the "lower orders," — would soon find themselves without teachers, without pu-

pils, without a choir, and probably without a parish. It is a comfort to think that even in older countries there is less and less of this impertinent interference: the costume of different ranks is being more and more assimilated; and the incidental episode of a few liveries in our cities is not enough to interfere with the general current. Never yet, to my knowledge, have I seen even a livery worn by a white native American; and to restrain the Sunday bonnets of her handmaidens, what lady has attempted?

This is as it should be. The Sunday bonnet of the Irish damsel is only the symbol of a very proper effort to obtain her share of all social advantages. Long may those ribbons wave! Meanwhile I think the fact that it is easier for the gentleman of the house to control the dress of his groom than for the lady to dictate that of her waiting-maid, — this must count against the theory that it is women who are the natural aristocrats.

Women are no doubt more sensitive than men upon matters of taste and breeding. This is partly from a greater average fineness of natural perception, and partly because their more secluded lives give them less of miscellaneous contact with the world. If Maud Muller and her husband had gone to board at the

same boarding-house with the Judge and his wife, that lady might have held aloof from the rustic bride, simply from inexperience in life, and not knowing just how to approach her. But the Judge, who might have been talking politics or real estate with the young farmer on the doorsteps that morning, would certainly find it easier to deal with him as a man and a brother at the dinner-table. From these different causes women get the credit or discredit of being more aristocratic than men are; so that in England the Tory supporters of female suffrage base it on the ground that these new voters at least will be conservative.

But, on the other hand, it is women, even more than men, who are attracted by those strong qualities of personal character which are always the antidote to aristocracy. No bold revolutionist ever defied the established conventionalisms of his times without drawing his strongest support from women. Poet and novelist love to depict the princess as won by the outlaw, the gypsy, the peasant. Women have a way of turning from the insipidities and proprieties of life to the wooer who has the stronger hand; from the silken Darnley to the rude Bothwell. This impulse is the natural corrective to the aristocratic instincts of womanhood; and though men feel it less, it is

still, even among them, one of the supports of republican institutions. We need to keep always balanced between the two influences of refined culture and of native force. The patrician class, wherever there is one, is pretty sure to be the more refined; the plebeian class, the more energetic. That woman is able to appreciate both elements is proof that she is quite capable of doing her share in social and political life. This English clergyman's wife, who devotes her soul to the trimmings and gored skirts of the lower orders, is no more entitled to represent her sex than are those ladies who give their whole attention to the "novel and intricate bonnets" advertised this season on Broadway.

MRS. BLANK'S DAUGHTERS

Mrs. Blank, of Far West — let us not draw her from the "sacred privacy of woman" by giving the name or place too precisely — has an insurmountable objection to woman's voting. So the newspapers say; and this objection is that she does not wish her daughters to encounter disreputable characters at the polls.

It is a laudable desire, to keep one's daughters from the slightest contact with such persons. But how does Mrs. Blank precisely mean to accomplish this? Will she shut up

the maidens in a harem? When they go out, will she send messengers through the streets to bid people hide their faces, as when an Oriental queen is passing? Will she send them travelling on camels, veiled by *yashmaks?* Will she prohibit them from being so much as seen by a man, except when a physician must be called for their ailments, and Miss Blank puts her arm through a curtain, in order that he may feel her pulse and know no more?

Who is Mrs. Blank, and how does she bring up her daughters? Does she send them to the post-office? If so, they may wait a half-hour at a time for the mail to open, and be elbowed by the most disreputable characters, waiting at their side. If it does the young ladies no harm to encounter this for the sake of getting their letters out, will it harm them to do it in order to get their ballots in? If they go to hear a concert they may be kept half an hour at the door, elbowed by saint and sinner indiscriminately. If they go to Washington to the President's inauguration, they may stand two hours with Mary Magdalen on one side of them and Judas Iscariot on the other. If this contact is rendered harmless by the fact that they are receiving political information, will it hurt them to stay five minutes longer in order to act upon the knowledge they have received?

This is on the supposition that the household of Blank are plain, practical women, unversed in the vanities of the world. If they belong to fashionable circles, how much harder to keep them wholly clear of disreputable contact! Should they, for instance, visit Newport, they may possibly be seen at the Casino, looking very happy as they revolve rapidly in the arms of some very disreputable characters; they will be seen in the surf, attired in the most scanty and clinging drapery, and kindly aided to preserve their balance by the devoted attentions of the same companions. Mrs. Blank, meanwhile, will look complacently on, with the other matrons: they are not supposed to know the current reputation of those whom their daughters meet "in society;" and, so long as there is no actual harm done, why should they care? Very well; but why, then, should they care if they encounter those same disreputable characters when they go to drop a ballot in the ballot-box? It will be a more guarded and distant meeting. It is not usual to dance round-dances at the ward-room, so far as I know, or to bathe in clinging drapery at that rather dry and dusty resort. If such very close intimacies are all right under the gas-light or at the beach, why should there be poison in merely passing near a disreputable character at the City Hall?

On the whole, the prospects of Mrs. Blank are not encouraging. Should she consult a physician for her daughters, he may be secretly or openly disreputable; should she call in a clergyman, he may, though a bishop, have carnal rather than spiritual eyes. If Miss Blank be caught in a shower, she may take refuge under the umbrella of an undesirable acquaintance; should she fall on the ice, the woman who helps to raise her may have sinned. There is not a spot in any known land where a woman can live in absolute seclusion from all contact with evil. Should the Misses Blank even turn Roman Catholics, and take to a convent, their very confessor may not be a genuine saint; and they may be glad to flee for refuge to the busy, buying, selling, dancing, voting world outside.

No: Mrs. Blank's prayers for absolute protection will never be answered, in respect to her daughters. Why not, then, find a better model for prayer in that made by Jesus for his disciples: "I pray Thee, not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." A woman was made for something nobler in the world, Mrs. Blank, than to be a fragile toy, to be put behind a glass case, and protected from contact. It is not her mission to be hidden

away from all life's evil, but bravely to work that the world may be reformed.

THE EUROPEAN PLAN

Every mishap among American women brings out renewed suggestions of what may be called the "European plan" in the training of young girls, — the plan, that is, of extreme seclusion and helplessness. It is usually forgotten, in these suggestions, that not much protection is really given anywhere to this particular class as a whole. Everywhere in Europe the restrictions are of caste, not of sex. Even in Turkey, travellers tell us, women of the humbler vocations are not much secluded. It is not the object of the "European plan," in any form, to protect the virtue of young women, as such, but only of young ladies; and the protection is pretty effectually limited to that order. Among the Portuguese in the island of Fayal I found it to be the ambition of each humble family to bring up one daughter in a sort of lady-like seclusion: she never went into the street alone, or without a hood which was equivalent to a veil; she was taught indoor industries only; she was constantly under the eye of her mother. But in order that one daughter might be thus protected, all the other daughters were allowed to go alone, day or evening, bareheaded or bare-

footed, by the loneliest mountain-paths, to bring oranges or firewood or whatever their work may be — heedless of protection. The safeguard was for a class: the average exposure of young womanhood was far greater than with us. So in London, while you rarely see a young lady alone in the streets, the housemaid is sent on errands at any hour of the evening with a freedom at which our city domestics would quite rebel; and one has to stay but a short time in Paris to see how entirely limited to a class is the alleged restraint under which young French girls are said to be kept.

Again, it is to be remembered that the whole "European plan," so far as it is applied on the continent of Europe, is a plan based upon utter distrust and suspicion, not only as to chastity, but as to all other virtues. It is applied among the higher classes almost as consistently to boys as to girls. In every school under church auspices, it is the French theory that boys are never to be left unwatched for a moment; and it is as steadily assumed that girls will be untruthful if left to themselves, as that they will do every other wrong. This to the Anglo-Saxon race seems very demoralizing. "Suspicion," said Sir Philip Sidney, "is the way to lose that which we fear to lose." Readers of the Brontë novels will remember the disgust

of the English pupils and teachers in French schools at the constant espionage around them; and I have more than once heard young girls who had been trained at such institutions say that it was a wonder if they had any truthfulness left, so invariable was the assumption that it was the nature of young girls to lie. I cannot imagine anything less likely to create upright and noble character, in man or woman, than the systematic application of the "European plan."

And that it produces just the results that might be feared, the whole tone of European literature proves. Foreigners, no doubt, do habitual injustice to the morality of French households; but it is impossible that fiction can utterly misrepresent the community which produces and reads it. When one thinks of the utter lightness of tone with which breaches, both of truth and chastity, are treated even in the better class of French novels and plays, it seems absurd to deny the correctness of the picture. Besides, it is not merely a question of plays and novels. Consider, for instance, the contempt with which Taine treats Thackeray for representing the mother of Pendennis as suffering agonies when she thinks that her son has seduced a young girl, a social inferior. Thackeray is not really considered a model of elevated tone, as to such matters, among Eng-

lish writers; but the Frenchman is simply amazed that the Englishman should describe even the saintliest of mothers as attaching so much weight to such a small affair.

An able newspaper writer, quoted with apparent approval by the "Boston Daily Advertiser," praises the supposed foreign method for the "habit of dependence and deference" that it produces; and because it gives to a young man a wife whose "habit of deference is established." But it must be remembered, that, where this theory is established, the habit of deference is logically carried much farther than mere conjugal convenience would take it. Its natural outcome is the authority of the priest, not of the husband. That domination of the women of France by the priesthood which forms even now the chief peril of the republic — which is the strength of legitimism and imperialism and all other conspiracies against the liberty of the French people — is only the visible and inevitable result of this dangerous docility.

One thing is certain, that the best preparation for freedom is freedom; and that no young girls are so poorly prepared for American life as those whose early years are passed in Europe. Some of the worst imprudences, the most unmaidenly and offensive actions, that I have ever heard of in decent society, have been on the

part of young women educated abroad, who have been launched into American life without its early training, — have been treated as children until they suddenly awakened to the freedom of women. On the other hand, I remember with pleasure, that a cultivated French mother, whose daughter's fine qualities were the best seal of her motherhood, once told me that the models she had chosen in her daughter's training were certain families of American young ladies, of whom she had, through peculiar circumstances, seen much in Paris.

FEATHERSES

One of the most amusing letters ever quoted in any book is that given in Curzon's "Monasteries of the Levant," as the production of a Turkish sultana who had just learned English. It is as follows: —

NOTE FROM ADILE SULTANA, THE BETROTHED OF ABBAS PASHA, TO HER ARMENIAN COMMISSIONER.

CONSTANTINOPLE, 1844.

MY NOBLE FRIEND: — Here are the featherses sent my soul, my noble friend, are there no other featherses leaved in the shop besides these featherses? and these featherses remains, and these featherses are ukly. They are very dear, who buyses dheses? And my noble friend, we want a noat from yourself; those you brought last tim, those you sees were very beautiful; we had searched;

my soul, I want featherses again, of those featherses. In Kalada there is plenty of feather. Whatever bees, I only want beautiful featherses; I want featherses of every desolation to-morrow.

(Signed) YOU KNOW WHO.

The first steps in culture do not, then, it seems, remove from the feminine soul the love of pretty things. Nor do the later steps wholly extinguish it; for did not Grace Greenwood hear the learned Mary Somerville conferring with the wise Harriet Martineau as to whether a certain dress should be dyed to match a certain shawl? Well! why not? Because women learn the use of the quill, are they to ignore "featherses"? Because they learn science, must they unlearn the arts, and, above all, the art of being beautiful? If men have lost it, they have reason to regret the loss. Let women hold to it, while yet within their reach.

Mrs. Rachel Howland of New Bedford, much prized and trusted as a public speaker among Friends, and a model of taste and quiet beauty in costume, delighted the young girls at a Newport Yearly Meeting, a few years since, by boldly declaring that she thought God meant women to make the world beautiful, as much as flowers and butterflies, and that there was no sin in tasteful dress, but only in devoting to it too much money or too much time. It is a

blessed doctrine. The utmost extremes of dress, the love of colors, of fabrics, of jewels, of "featherses," are, after all, but an effort after the beautiful. The reason why the beautiful is not always the result is because so many women are ignorant or merely imitative. They have no sense of fitness: the short wear what belongs to the tall, and brunettes sacrifice their natural beauty to look like blondes. Or they have no adaptation; and even an emancipated woman may show a disregard for appropriateness, as where a fine lady sweeps the streets, or a fair orator the platform, with a silken or velvet train which accords only with a carpet as luxurious as itself. What is inappropriate is never beautiful. What is merely in the fashion is never beautiful. But who does not know some woman whose taste and training are so perfect that fashion becomes to her a means of grace instead of a despot, and the worst excrescence that can be prescribed — a *chignon*, a hoop, a panier — is softened into something so becoming that even the Parisian bondage seems but a chain of roses?

In such hands, even "featherses" become a fine art, not a matter of vanity. Are women so much more vain than men? No doubt they talk more about their dress, for there is much more to talk about; yet did you never hear the

men of fashion discuss boots and hats and the liveries of grooms? A good friend of mine, a shoemaker, who supplies very high heels for a great many pretty feet on Fifth Avenue in New York, declares that women are not so vain in that direction as men. "A man who thinks he has a handsome foot," quoth our fashionable Crispin, "is apt to give us more trouble than any lady among our customers. I have noticed this for twenty years." The testimony is consoling — to women.

And this naturally suggests the question, What is to be the future of masculine costume? Is the present formlessness and gracelessness and monotony of hue to last forever, as suited to the rough needs of a workaday world? It is to be remembered that the difference in this respect between the dress of the sexes is a very recent thing. Till within a century or so, men dressed as picturesquely as women, and paid as minute attention to their costume. Even the fashions in armor varied as extensively as the fashions in gowns. One of Henry III.'s courtiers, Sir J. Arundel, had fifty-two complete suits of cloth of gold. No satin, no velvet, was too elegant for those who sat to Copley for their pictures. In Puritan days the laws could hardly be made severe enough to prevent men from wearing silver-lace and

"broad bone-lace," and shoulder-bands of undue width, and double ruffs and "immoderate great breeches." What seemed to the Cavaliers the extreme of stupid sobriety in dress would pass now for the most fantastic array. Fancy Samuel Pepys going to a wedding of to-day in his "new colored silk suit and coat trimmed with gold buttons, and gold broad lace round his hands, very rich and fine." It would give to the ceremony the aspect of a fancy ball; yet how much prettier a sight is a fancy ball than the ordinary entertainment of the period!

At intervals the rigor of masculine costume is a little relaxed; velvets resume their picturesque sway: and, instead of the customary suit of solemn black, gentlemen even appear in blue and gold editions at evening parties. Let us hope that good sense and taste may yet meet each other, for both sexes; that men may borrow for their dress some womanly taste, women some masculine sense; and society may again witness a graceful and appropriate costume, without being too much absorbed in "featherses."

VI

STUDY AND WORK

"Movet me ingens scientiarum admiratio, seu legis communis æquitas, ut in nostro sexu, rarum non esse feram, id quod omnium votis dignissimum est. Nam cum sapientia tantum generis humani ornamentum sit, ut ad omnes et singulos (quoad quidem per sortem cujusque liceat) extendi jure debeat, non vidi, cur virgini, in qua excolendi sese ornandique sedulitatem admittimus, non conveniat mundus hic omnium longè pulcherrimus." — ANNÆ MARIÆ À SCHURMAN EPISTOLÆ. (1638.)

"A great reverence for knowledge and the natural sense of justice urge me to encourage in my own sex that which is most worthy the aspirations of all. For, since wisdom is so great an ornament of the human race that it should of right be extended (so far as practicable) to each and every one, I have not perceived why this fairest of ornaments should not be appropriate for the maiden, to whom we permit all diligence in the decoration and adornment of herself."

EXPERIMENTS

Why is it, that, whenever anything is done for women in the way of education, it is called "an experiment," — something that is to be long considered, stoutly opposed, grudgingly yielded, and dubiously watched, — while, if the same thing is done for men, its desirableness is assumed as a

matter of course, and the thing is done? Thus, when Harvard College was founded, it was not regarded as an experiment, but as an institution. The "General Court," in 1636, "agreed to give 400*l.* towards a schoale or colledge," and the affair was settled. Every subsequent step in the expanding of educational opportunities for young men has gone in the same way. But when there seems a chance of extending, however irregularly, some of the same collegiate advantages to women, I observe that respectable newspapers, in all good faith, are apt to speak of the measure as an "experiment."

It seems to me no more of an "experiment" than when a boy who has usually eaten up his whole apple becomes a little touched with a sense of justice, and finally decides to offer his sister the smaller half. If he has ever regarded that offer as an experiment, the first actual trial will put the result into the list of certainties; and it will become an axiom in his mind that girls like apples. Whatever may be said about the position of women in law and society, it is clear that their educational disadvantages have been a prolonged disgrace to the other sex, and one for which women themselves are in no way accountable. When Françoise de Saintonges, in the sixteenth century, wished to establish girls' schools in France, she was hooted

in the streets, and her father called together four doctors of law to decide whether she was possessed of a devil in planning to teach women, — "*pour s'assurer qu'instruire des femmes n'était pas un œuvre du démon.*" From that day to this we have seen women almost always more ready to be taught than was any one else to teach them. Talk as you please about their wishing or not wishing to vote: they have certainly wished for instruction, and have had it doled out to them almost as grudgingly as if it were the ballot itself.

Consider the educational history of Massachusetts, for instance. The wife of President John Adams was born in 1744; and she says of her youth that "female education, in the best families, went no farther than writing and arithmetic." Barry tells us in his "History of Massachusetts," that the public education was first provided for boys only; "but light soon broke in, and girls were allowed to attend the public schools two hours a day." [1] It appears from President Quincy's "Municipal History of Boston," [2] that from 1790 girls were there admitted to such schools, but during the summer months only, when there were not boys enough to fill them, — from April 20 to October 20 of each year. This lasted until 1822,

[1] Vol. iii. 323. [2] Page 21.

when Boston became a city. Four years after, an attempt was made to establish a high school for girls, which was not, however, to teach Latin and Greek. It had, in the words of the school committee of 1854, "an alarming success;" and the school was abolished after eighteen months' trial, because the girls crowded into it; and as Mr. Quincy, with exquisite simplicity, records, "not one voluntarily quitted it, and there was no reason to suppose that any one admitted to the school would voluntarily quit for the whole three years, except in case of marriage!"

How amusing seems it now to read of such an "experiment" as this, abandoned only because of its overwhelming success! How absurd now seem the discussions of a few years ago! — the doubts whether young women really desired higher education, whether they were capable of it, whether their health would bear it, whether their parents would permit it. An address I gave before the Social Science Association on this subject, at Boston, May 14, 1873, now seems to me such a collection of platitudes that I hardly see how I dared come before an intelligent audience with such needless reasonings. It is as if I had soberly labored to prove that two and two make four, or that ginger is "hot i' the mouth." Yet the subsequent

discussion in that meeting showed that around even these harmless and commonplace propositions the battle of debate could rage hot; and it really seemed as if even to teach women the alphabet ought still to be mentioned as "a promising experiment." Now, with the successes before us of so many colleges; with the spectacle at Cambridge of young women actually reading Plato "at sight" with Professor Goodwin, — it surely seems as if the higher education of women might be considered quite beyond the stage of experiment, and might henceforth be provided for in the same common-sense and matter-of-course way which we provide for the education of young men.

And, if this point is already reached in education, how long before it will also be reached in political life, and women's voting be viewed as a matter of course, and a thing no longer experimental?

INTELLECTUAL CINDERELLAS

When, some thirty years ago, the extraordinary young mathematician, Truman Henry Safford, first attracted the attention of New England by his rare powers, I well remember the pains that were taken to place him under instruction by the ablest Harvard professors: the greater his abilities, the more needful that he should have

careful and symmetrical training. The men of science did not say, "Stand off! let him alone! let him strive patiently until he has achieved something positively valuable, and he may be sure of prompt and generous recognition — when he is fifty years old." If such a course would have been mistaken and ungenerous if applied to Professor Safford, why is it not something to be regretted that it was applied to Mrs. Somerville? In her case, the mischief was done: she was, happily, strong enough to bear it; but, as the English critics say, we never shall know what science has lost by it. We can do nothing for her now; but we could do something for future women like her, by pointing this obvious moral for their benefit, instead of being content with a mere tardy recognition of success, after a woman has expended half a century in struggle.

It is commonly considered to be a step forward in civilization, that whereas ancient and barbarous nations exposed children to special hardships, in order to kill off the weak and toughen the strong, modern nations aim to rear all alike carefully, without either sacrificing or enfeebling. If we apply this to muscle, why not to mind? and if to men's minds, why not to women's? Why use for men's intellects, which are claimed to be stronger, the forcing

process, — offering, for instance, many thousand dollars a year in gratuities at our colleges, that young men may be induced to come and learn, — and only withhold assistance from the weaker minds of women? A little schoolgirl once told me that she did not object to her teacher's showing partiality, but thought she "ought to show partiality to all alike." If all our university systems are wrong, and the proper diet for mathematical genius consists of fifty years' snubbing, let us employ it, by all means; but let it be applied to both sexes.

That it is the duty of women, even under disadvantageous circumstances, to prove their purpose by labor, to "verify their credentials," is true enough; but this moral is only part of the moral of Mrs. Somerville's book, and is cruelly incomplete without the other half. What a garden of roses was Mrs. Somerville's life, according to some comfortable critics! "All that for which too many women nowadays are content to sit and whine, or fitfully and carelessly struggle, came naturally and quietly to Mrs. Somerville. And the reason was that she never asked for anything until she had earned it; or, rather, she never asked at all, but was content to earn." Naturally and quietly! You might as well say that Garrison fought slavery "quietly," or that Frederick Douglass's escape

came to him "naturally." Turn to the book itself, and see with what strong, though never actually bitter, feeling, the author looks back upon her hard struggle.

"I was intensely ambitious to excel in something; for I felt in my own breast that women were capable of taking a higher place in creation than that assigned them in my early days, which was very low" (p. 60). "Nor . . . should I have had courage to ask any of them a question, for I should have been laughed at. I was often very sad and forlorn; not a hand held out to help me" (p. 47). "My father came home for a short time, and, somehow or other finding out what I was about, said to my mother, 'Peg, we must put a stop to this, or we shall have Mary in a strait-jacket one of these days'" (p. 54). "I continued my mathematical and other pursuits, but under great disadvantages; for, although my husband did not prevent me from studying, I met with no sympathy whatever from him, as he had a very low opinion of the capacity of my sex, and had neither knowledge of nor interest in science of any kind" (p. 75). "I was considered eccentric and foolish; and my conduct was highly disapproved of by many, especially by some members of my own family" (p. 80). "A man can always command his time under the plea of business: a woman is not allowed any such excuse" (p. 164). And so on.

At last, in 1831, — Mrs. Somerville being

then fifty-one, — her work on "The Mechanism of the Heavens" appeared. Then came universal recognition, generous if not prompt, a tardy acknowledgment. "Our relations," she says, "and others who had so severely criticised and ridiculed me, astonished at my success, were now loud in my praise." [1] No doubt. So were, probably, Cinderella's sisters loud in her praise, when the prince at last took her from the chimney-corner, and married her. They had kept for themselves, to be sure, as long as they could, the delights and opportunities of life; while she had taken the place assigned her in her early days, — "which was very low," as Mrs. Somerville says. But, for all that, they were very kind to her in the days of her prosperity; and no doubt packed their little trunks and came to visit their dear sister at the palace as often as she could wish. And, doubtless, the Fairyland Monthly of that day, when it came to review Cinderella's "Personal Recollections," pointed out that, as soon as that distinguished lady had "achieved something positively valuable," she received "prompt and generous recognition."

[1] Page 176.

CUPID-AND-PSY-CHOLOGY

The learned Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, is frequently facetious; and his jokes are quoted with the deference due to the chief officer of the chief college of that great university. Now it is known that the Cambridge colleges, and Trinity College in particular, are doing a great deal for the instruction of women. The young women of Girton College and Newnham College — both of these being institutions for their benefit, in or near Cambridge — not only enjoy the instruction of the university, but they share it under a guaranty that it shall be of the best quality; because they attend, in many cases, the very same lectures with the young men. Where this is not done, they sometimes use the vacant lecture-rooms of the college; and it was in connection with an application for this privilege that the Master of Trinity College made a celebrated joke. When told that the lecture-room was needed for a class of young women in psychology, he said, "Psychology? What kind of psychology? Cupid-and-Psychology, I suppose."

Cupid-and-Psychology is, after all, not so bad a department of instruction. It may be taken as a good enough symbol of that mingling of head and heart which is the best result of all training. One of the worst evils of the sepa-

rate education of the sexes has been the easy assumption that men were to become all head, and women all heart. It was to correct the evils of this that Ben Jonson proposed for his ideal woman

"a learned and a manly soul."

It was an implied recognition of it from the other side when the great masculine intellect, Goethe, held up as a guiding force in his Faust "the eternal womanly" (*das ewige weibliche*). After all, each sex must teach the other, and impart to the other. It will never do to have all the brains poured into one human being, and christened "man;" and all the affections decanted into another, and labelled "woman." Nature herself rejects this theory. Darwin himself, the interpreter of nature, shows that there is a perpetual effort going on, by unseen forces, to equalize the sexes, since sons often inherit from the mother, and daughters from the father. And we all take pleasure in discovering in the noblest of each sex something of the qualities of the other, — the tender affections in great men, the imperial intellect in great women.

On the whole, there is no harm, but rather good, in the new science of Cupid-and-Psychology. There are combinations for which no single word can suffice. The phrase belongs

to the same class with Lowell's witty denunciation of a certain tiresome letter-writer, as being, not his incubus, but his "pen-and-inkubus." It is as well to admit it first as last: Cupid-and-Psychology will be taught wherever young men and women study together. Not in the direct and simple form of mutual love-making, perhaps; for they tell the visitor, at universities which admit both sexes, that the young men and maidens do not fall in love with each other, but are apt to seek their mates elsewhere. The new science has a wider bearing, and suggests that the brain is incomplete, after all, without the affections; and so are the affections without the brain. A certain professorship at Harvard University which the Rev. Dr. Francis G. Peabody now fills, and which Phillips Brooks was once invited to fill, was founded by a woman, Miss Plummer; and the name proposed by her for it was "a professorship of the heart," though they after all called it only a professorship of "Christian morals." We need the heart in our colleges, it seems, even if we only get it under the ingenious title of Cupid-and-Psychology.

SELF-SUPPORTING WIVES

For one, I have never been fascinated by the style of domestic paradise that English novels depict, — half a dozen unmarried daughters round the family hearth, all assiduously doing worsted-work and petting their papa. I believe a sufficiency of employment to be the only normal and healthy condition for a human being; and where there is not work enough to employ the full energies of all at home, it seems as proper for young women as for young birds to leave the parental nest. If this additional work is done for money, very well. It is the conscious dignity of self-support that removes the traditional curse from labor, and woman has a right to claim her share in that dignified position.

Yet I cannot agree, on the other hand, with those who maintain that the true woman should be self-supporting, even in marriage. Woman's part of the family task — the care of home and children — is just as essential to building up the family fortunes as the very different toil of the out-door partner. For young married women to undertake any more direct aid to the family income is in most cases utterly undesirable, and is asking of themselves a great deal too much. And this is not because they are to be encouraged in indolence, but because they already, in a normal condition of things, have their hands

full. As, on this point, I may differ from some of my readers, let me explain precisely what I mean.

As I write, there are at work, in another part of the house, two paper-hangers, a man and his wife, each forty-five or fifty years of age. Their children are grown up, and some of them married: they have a daughter at home, who is old enough to do the housework, and leave the mother free. There is no way of organizing the labors of this household better than this: the married pair toil together during the day, and go home together to their evening rest. A happier couple I never saw; it is a delight to see them cheerily at work together, cutting, pasting, hanging: their life seems like a prolonged industrial picnic; and if I had the ill-luck to own as many palaces as an English duke I should keep them permanently occupied in putting fresh papers on the walls.

But the merit of this employment for the woman is that it interferes with no other duty. Were she a young mother with little children, and obliged by her paper-hanging to neglect them, or to leave them at a "day-nursery," or to overwork herself by combining too many cares, then the sight of her would be very sad. So sacred a thing is motherhood, so paramount and absorbing the duty of a mother to

her child, that in a true state of society I think she should be utterly free from all other duties, — even, if possible, from the ordinary cares of housekeeping. If she has spare health and strength to do these other things as pleasures, very well; but she should be relieved from them as duties. And as to the need of self-support, I can hardly conceive of an instance where it can be to the mother of young children anything but a disaster. As we all know, this calamity often occurs; I have seen it among the factory operatives at the North, and among the negro women in the cotton-fields at the South: in both cases it is a tragedy, and the bodies and brains of mother and children alike suffer. That the mother should bear and tend and nurture, while the father supports and protects, — this is the true division.

Does this bear in any way upon suffrage? Not at all. The mother can inform herself upon public questions in the intervals of her cares, as the father among his; and the baby in the cradle is a perpetual appeal to her, as to him, that the institutions under which that baby dwells may be kept pure. One of the most devoted young mothers I ever knew — the younger sister of Margaret Fuller Ossoli — made it a rule, no matter how much her children absorbed her, to read books or newspapers

for an hour every day; in order, she said, that she should be more to them than a mere source of physical nurture, and that her mind should be kept fresh and alive for them. But to demand in addition that such a mother should earn money for them is to ask too much; and there is many a tombstone in New England, which, if it told the truth, would tell what comes of such an effort.

THOROUGH "The hopeless defect of women in all practical matters," said a shrewd merchant the other day, "is that it is impossible to make them thorough." It was a shallow remark, and so I told him. Women are thorough in the things which they have been expected to regard as their sphere, — in their housekeeping and their dress and their social observances. There is nothing more thorough on earth than the way housework is done in a genuine New England household. There is an exquisite thoroughness in the way a milliner's or a dressmaker's work is done, — a work such as clumsy man cannot rival, and can hardly estimate. No general plans his campaigns or marshals his armies better than some women of society — the late Mrs. Paran Stevens, for instance — manage the circles of which they are the centre. Day and night, winter and sum-

mer, at city or watering-place, year in and year out, such a woman keeps open house for her gay world. She has a perpetual series of guests who must be fed luxuriously, and amused profusely; she talks to them in three or four languages; at her entertainments she notes who is present and who absent, as carefully as Napoleon watched his soldiers; her interchange of cards, alone, is a thing as complex as the army muster-rolls: thus she plans, organizes, conquers, and governs. People speak of her existence as that of a doll or a toy, when she is the most untiring of campaigners. Grant that her aim is, after all, unworthy, and that you pity the worn face which has to force so many smiles. No matter: the smiles are there, and so is the success. I often wish that the reformers would do their work as thoroughly as the women of society do theirs.

No, there is no constitutional want of thoroughness in women. The trouble is that into the new work upon which they are just entering they have not yet brought their thoroughness to bear. They suffer and are defrauded and are reproached, simply because they have not yet nerved themselves to do well the things which they have asserted their right to do. A distinguished woman, who earns one of the largest incomes ever honestly earned by any one

of her sex, off the stage, told me the other day that she left all her business affairs to the management of others, and did not even know how to draw a check on a bank. What a melancholy self-exhibition was that of a clever American woman, whom I knew, the author of half a dozen successful books, refusing to look her own accounts in the face until they had got into such a tangle that not even her own referees could disentangle them to suit her! These things show, not that women are constitutionally wanting in thoroughness, but that it is hard to make them carry this quality into new fields.

I wish I could possibly convey to the young women who write for advice on literary projects something of the meaning of this word "thorough" as applied to literary work. Scarcely any of them seem to have a conception of it. Dash, cleverness, recklessness, impatience of revision or of patient investigation, these are the common traits. To a person of experience, no stupidity is so discouraging as a brilliancy that has no roots. It brings nothing to pass; whereas a slow stupidity, if it takes time enough, may conquer the world. Consider that for more than twenty years the path of literature has been quite as fully open for women as for men, in America, — the payment the same,

the honor the same, the obstacles no greater. Collegiate education has until quite recently been denied them, but how many men succeed as writers without that advantage! Yet how little, how very little, of permanent literary work has yet been done by American women! Young girls appear one after another: each writes a single clever story or a single sweet poem, and then disappears forever. Look at Griswold's "Female Poets of America," and you are disposed to turn back to the title-page, and see if these utterly forgotten names do not really represent the "female poets" of some other nation. They are forgotten, as most of the more numerous "female prose writers" are forgotten, because they had no root. Nobody doubts that women have cleverness enough, and enough of power of expression. If you could open the mails, and take out the women's letters, as somebody says, they would prove far more graphic and entertaining than those of the men. They would be written, too, in what Macaulay calls — speaking of Madame d'Arblay's early style — "true woman's English, clear, natural, and lively." What they need, in order to convert this epistolary brilliancy into literature, is to be thorough.

You cannot separate woman's rights and her responsibilities. In all ages of the world she

has had a certain limited work to do, and has done that well. All that is needed, when new spheres are open, is that she should carry the same fidelity into those. If she will work as hard to shape the children of her brain as to rear her bodily offspring, will do intellectual work as well as she does housework, and will meet her moral responsibilities as she meets her social engagements, then opposition will soon disappear. The habit of thoroughness is the key to all high success. Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well. Only those who are faithful in a few things will rightfully be made rulers over many.

LITERARY ASPIRANTS

The brilliant Lady Ashburton used to say of herself that she had never written a book, and knew nobody whose books she would like to have written. This does not seem to be the ordinary state of mind among those who write letters of inquiry to authors. If I may judge from these letters, the yearning for a literary career is now almost greater among women than among men. Perhaps this is because of some literary successes lately achieved by women. Perhaps it is because they have fewer outlets for their energies. Perhaps they find more obstacles in literature than young men find, and have,

therefore, more need to write letters of inquiry about it. It is certain that they write such letters quite often; and ask questions that test severely the supposed omniscience of the author's brain, — questions bearing on logic, rhetoric, grammar, and orthography; where to find a publisher, and how to obtain a well-disciplined mind.

These letters may sometimes be too long or come too often for convenience, nor is the consoling postage-stamp always remembered. But they are of great value as giving real glimpses of American social life, and of the present tendencies of American women. They sometimes reveal such intellectual ardor and imagination, such modesty, and such patience under difficulties, as to do good to the reader, whatever they may do to the writer. They certainly suggest a few thoughts, which may as well be expressed, once for all, in print.

Behind almost all these letters there lies a laudable desire to achieve success. "Would you have the goodness to tell us how success can be obtained?" How can this be answered, my dear young lady, when you leave it to the reader to guess what your definition of success may be? For instance, here is Mr. Mansfield Tracy Walworth, who was murdered the other day in New York. He was at once mentioned

in the newspapers as a "celebrated author." Never in my life having heard of him, I looked in a "Manual of American Literature," and there found that Mr. Walworth's novel of "Warwick" had a sale of seventy-five thousand copies, and his "Delaplaine" of forty-five thousand. Is it a success to have secured a sale like that for your books, and then to die, and have your brother penmen ask, "Who was he?" Yet, certainly, a sale of seventy-five thousand copies is not to be despised; and I fear I know many youths and maidens who would willingly write novels much poorer than "Warwick" for the sake of a circulation like that. I do not think that Hawthorne, however, would have accepted these conditions; and he certainly did not have this style of success.

Nor do I think he had any right to expect it. He had made his choice, and had reason to be satisfied. The very first essential for literary success is to decide what success means. If a young girl pines after the success of Marion Harland and Mrs. Southworth, let her seek it. It is possible that she may obtain it, or surpass it; and though she might do better, she might do far worse. It is, at any rate, a laudable aim to be popular: popularity may be a very creditable thing, unless you pay too high a price for it. It is a pleasant thing, and has many contingent

advantages, — balanced by this great danger, that one is apt to mistake it for real success.

"Learning hath made the most," said old Fuller, "by those books on which the booksellers have lost." If this be true of learning, it is quite as true of genius and originality. A book may be immediately popular and also immortal, but the chances are the other way. It is more often the case that a great writer gradually creates the taste by which he is enjoyed. Wordsworth in England and Emerson in America were striking instances of this; and authors of far less fame have yet the same choice which they had. You can take the standard which the book market offers, and train yourself for that. This will, in the present age, be sure to educate certain qualities in you,—directness, vividness, animation, dash, — even if it leaves other qualities untrained. Or you can make a standard of your own, and aim at that, taking your chance of seeing the public agree with you. Very likely you may fail; perhaps you may be wrong in your fancy, after all, and the public may be right: if you fail, you may find it hard to bear; but, on the other hand, you may have the inward "glory and joy" which nothing but fidelity to an ideal standard can give. All this applies to all forms of work, but it applies conspicuously to literature.

Instead, therefore, of offering to young writers the usual comforting assurance, that, if they produce anything of real merit, it will be sure to succeed, I should caution them first to make their own definition of success, and then act accordingly. Hawthorne succeeded in his way, and Mr. M. T. Walworth in his way; and each of these would have been very unreasonable if he had expected to succeed in both ways. There is always an opening for careful and conscientious literary work; and by such work many persons obtain a modest support. There are also some great prizes to be won; but these are commonly, though not always, won by work of a more temporary and sensational kind. Make your choice; and, when you have got precisely what you asked for, do not complain because you have missed what you would not take.

THE CAREER OF LETTERS

A young girl of some talent once told me that she had devoted herself to "the career of letters." I found, on inquiry, that she had obtained a situation as writer of society gossip for a New York newspaper. I can hardly imagine any life that leads more directly away from any really literary career, or any life about which it is harder to give counsel. The work of a newspaper correspondent, especially in the "society" direc-

tion, is so full of trials and temptations, for one of either sex, in our dear, inquisitive, gossiping America, that one cannot help watching with especial solicitude all women who enter it. Their special gifts as women are a source of danger: they are keener of observation from the very fact of their sex, more active in curiosity, more skilful in achieving their ends; in a world of gossip they are the queens, and men but their subjects, hence their greater danger.

In Newport, New York, Washington, it is the same thing. The unbounded appetite for private information about public or semi-public people creates its own purveyors; and these, again, learn to believe with unflinching heartiness in the work they do. I have rarely encountered a successful correspondent of this description who had not become thoroughly convinced that the highest desire of every human being is to see his name in print, no matter how. Unhappily, there is a great deal to encourage this belief: I have known men to express great indignation at an unexpected newspaper-puff, and then to send ten dollars privately to the author. This is just the calamity of the profession, that it brings one in contact with this class of social hypocrites; and the "personal" correspondent gradually loses faith that there is any other class to be found.

Then there is the perilous temptation to pay off grudges in this way, to revenge slights, by the use of a power with which few people are safely to be trusted. In many cases, such a correspondent is simply a child playing with poisoned arrows: he poisons others; and it is no satisfaction to know that in time he may also poison himself, and paralyze his own power for mischief.

There lies before me a letter written some years ago to a young lady anxious to enter on this particular "career of letters," — a letter from an experienced New York journalist. He has employed, he says, hundreds of lady correspondents, for little or no compensation; and one of his few successful writers he thus describes: "She succeeds by pushing her way into society, and extracting information from fashionable people and officials and their wives. . . . She flatters the vain, and overawes the weak, and gets by sheer impudence what other writers cannot. . . . I would not wish you to be like her, or reduced to the necessity of doing what she does, for any success journalism can possibly give." And who can help echoing this opinion? If this is one of the successful laborers, where shall we place the unsuccessful; or, rather, is success, or failure, the greater honor?

Personal journalism has a prominence in this country with which nothing in any other coun-

try can be compared. What is called publicity in England or France means the most peaceful seclusion, compared with the glare of notoriety which an enterprising correspondent can flash out at any time — as if by opening the bull's-eye of a dark lantern — upon the quietest of his contemporaries. It is essentially an American institution, and not one of those in which we have reason to feel most pride. It is to be observed, however, that foreigners, if in office, take to it very readily; and it is said that no people cultivate the reporters at Washington more assiduously than the diplomatic corps, who like to send home the personal notices of themselves, in order to prove to their governments that they are highly esteemed in the land to which they are appointed. But however it may be with them, it is certain that many people still like to keep their public and private lives apart, and shrink from even the inevitable eminence of fame. One of the very most popular of American authors has said that he never, to this day, has overcome a slight feeling of repugnance on seeing his own name in print.

TALKING AND TAKING

Every time a woman does anything original or remarkable, — inventing a rat-trap, let us say, or carving thirty-six heads on a walnut-shell, — all

observers shout applause. "There 's a woman for you, indeed! Instead of talking about her rights, she takes them. That 's the way to do it. What a lesson to these declaimers upon the platform!"

It does not seem to occur to these wise people that the right to talk is itself one of the chief rights in America, and the way to reach all the others. To talk is to make a beginning, at any rate. To catch people with your ideas is more than to contrive a rat-trap; and Isotta Nogarola, carving thirty-six empty heads, was not working in so practical a fashion as Mary Livermore when she instructs thirty-six hundred full ones.

It shows the good sense of the woman-suffrage agitators, that they have decided to begin with talk. In the first place, talking is the most lucrative of all professions in America; and therefore it is the duty of American women to secure their share of it. Mrs. Frances Anne Kemble used to say that she read Shakespeare in public "for her bread;" and when, after melting all hearts by a course of farewell readings, she decided to begin reading again, she said she was doing it "for her butter." So long as women are often obliged to support themselves and their children, and perhaps their husbands, by their own labor, they have

no right to work cheaply, unless driven to it. Anna Dickinson had no right to make fifteen dollars a week by sewing, if, by stepping out of the ranks of needle-women into the ranks of the talkers, she could make a hundred dollars a day. Theorize as we may, the fact is that there is no kind of work in America which brings such sure profits as public speaking. If women are unfitted for it, or if they "know the value of peace and quietness," as the hand-organ man says, and can afford to hold their tongues, let them do so. But if they have tongues, and like to use them, they certainly ought to make some money by the performance.

This is the utilitarian view. And when we bring in higher objects, it is plain that the way to get anything in America is to talk about it. Silence is golden, no doubt, and like other gold remains in the bank-vaults, and does not just now circulate very freely as currency. Even literature in America is utterly second to oratory as a means of immediate influence. Of all sway, that of the orator is the most potent and most perishable; and the student and the artist are apt to hold themselves aloof from it, for this reason. But it is the one means in America to accomplish immediate results, and women who would take their rights must take them through talking. It is the appointed way.

Under a good old-fashioned monarchy, if a woman wished to secure anything for her sex, she must cajole a court, or become the mistress of a monarch. That epoch ended with the French Revolution. When Bonaparte wished to silence Madame de Staël, he said, "What does that woman want? Does she want the money the government owes to her father?" When Madame de Staël heard of it, she said, "The question is not what I want, but what I think." Henceforth women, like men, are to say what they think. For all that flattery and seduction and sin, we have substituted the simple weapon of talk. If women wish education, they must talk; if better laws, they must talk. The one chief argument against woman suffrage, with men, is that so few women even talk about it.

As long as the human voice can effect anything, it is the duty of women to use it; and in America, where it effects everything, they should talk all the time. When they have obtained, as a class, absolute equality of rights with men, their appeals on this subject may cease, and they may accept, if they please, that naughty masculine definition of a happy marriage, — the union of a deaf man with a dumb woman.

HOW TO SPEAK IN PUBLIC

There are other things that women wish to do, it seems, beside studying and voting. There are a good many — if I may judge from letters that occasionally come to me — who are taking, or wish to take, their first lessons in public speaking. Not necessarily very much in public, or before mixed audiences, but perhaps merely to say to a roomful of ladies, or before the committee of a Christian Union, what they desire to say. "How shall I make myself heard? How shall I learn to express myself? How shall I keep my head clear? Is there any school for debate?" And so on. My dear young lady, it does not take much wisdom, but only a little experience, to answer some of these questions. So I am not afraid to try.

The best school for debate is debating. So far as mere confidence and comfort are concerned, the great thing is to gain the habit of speech, even if one speaks badly. And the practice of an ordinary debating society has also this advantage, that it teaches you to talk sense (lest you be laughed at), to speak with some animation (lest your hearers go to sleep), to think out some good arguments (because you are trying to convince somebody), and to guard against weak reasoning or unfounded assertion (lest your opponent trip you up). Speaking in

a debating society thus gives you the same advantage that a lawyer derives from the presence of an opposing counsel: you learn to guard yourself at all points. It is the absence of this check which is the great intellectual disadvantage of the pulpit. When a lawyer says a foolish thing in an argument, he is pretty sure to find it out; but a clergyman may go on repeating his foolish thing for fifty years without discovering it, for want of an opponent.

For the art of making your voice heard, I must refer you to an elocutionist. Yet one thing at least you might acquire for yourself, — a thing that lies at the foundation of all good speaking, — the complete and thorough enunciation of every syllable. So great is the delight, to my ear at least, of a perfectly distinct and clear-cut utterance, that I fear I should rather listen for an hour to the merest nonsense, so uttered, than to the very wisdom of angels if given in a confused or nasal or slovenly way. If you wish to know what I mean by a clear and satisfactory utterance, go to a woman-suffrage convention, and hear Miss Mary F. Eastman.

As to your employment of language, the great aim is to be simple, and, in a measure, conversational; and then let eloquence come of itself. If most people talked as well in public as in private, public meetings would be more

interesting. To acquire a conversational tone, there is good sense in Edward Everett Hale's suggestion, that every person who is called on to speak, — let us say, at a public dinner, — instead of standing up and talking about his surprise at being called on, should simply make his last remark to his neighbor at the table the starting-point for what he says to the whole company. He will thus make sure of a perfectly natural key, to begin with; and can go on from this quiet "As I was just saying to Mr. Smith," to discuss the gravest question of Church or State. It breaks the ice for him, like the remark upon the weather by which we open our interview with the person whom we have longed for years to meet. Beginning in this way at the level of the earth's surface, we can join hands and rise to the clouds. Begin in the clouds, — as some of my most esteemed friends are wont to do, — and you have to sit down before reaching the earth.

And, to come last to what is first in importance, I am taking it for granted that you have something to say, and a strong desire to say it. Perhaps you can say it better for writing it out in full beforehand. But whether you do this or not, remember that the more simple and consecutive your thought, the easier it will be both to keep it in mind and to utter it. The more

orderly your plan, the less likely you will be to "get bewildered," or to "lose the thread." Think it out so clearly that the successive parts lead to one another, and then there will be little strain upon your memory. For each point you make, provide at least one good argument and one good illustration, and you can, after a little practice, safely leave the rest to the suggestion of the moment. But so much as this you must have, to be secure. Methods of preparation of course vary extremely; yet I suppose the secret of the composure of an experienced speaker to lie usually in this, that he has made sure beforehand of a sufficient number of good points to carry him through, even if nothing good should occur to him on the spot. Thus wise people, in going on a fishing excursion, take with them not merely their fishing tackle, but a few fish; and then, if they are not sure of their luck, they will be sure of their chowder.

These are some of the simple hints that might be given, in answer to inquiring friends. I can remember when they would have saved me some anguish of spirit; and they may be of some use to others now. I write, then, not to induce any one to talk for the sake of talking, — Heaven forbid! — but that those who are longing to say something should not fancy the obstacles insurmountable, when they are really slight.

VII

PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT

"That liberty, or freedom, consists in having an actual share in the appointment of those who frame the laws, and who are to be the guardians of every man's life, property, and peace; for the all of one man is as dear to him as the all of another, and the poor man has an equal right, but more need, to have representatives in the legislature than the rich one. That they who have no voice nor vote in the electing of representatives do not enjoy liberty, but are absolutely enslaved to those who have votes, and to their representatives; for to be enslaved is to have governors whom other men have set over us, and be subject to laws made by the representatives of others, without having had representatives of our own to give consent in our behalf." — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, in Sparks's Franklin, ii. 372.

WE THE PEOPLE

I remember that when I went to school I used to look with wonder on the title of a now forgotten newspaper of those days which was then often in the hands of one of the older scholars. I remember nothing else about the newspaper, or about the boy, except that the title of the sheet he used to unfold was "We the People;" and that he derived from it his school nickname, by a char-

acteristic boyish parody, and was usually mentioned as "Us the Folks."

Probably all that was taught in that school, in regard to American history, was not of so much value as the permanent fixing of this phrase in our memories. It seemed very natural, in later years, to come upon my old friend "Us the Folks," reproduced in almost every charter of our national government, as thus: —

"WE THE PEOPLE of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to oursèlves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." — *United States Constitution, Preamble.*

"WE THE PEOPLE of Maine do agree," etc. — *Constitution of Maine.*

"All government of right originates from THE PEOPLE, is founded in their consent, and instituted for the general good." — *Constitution of New Hampshire.*

"The body politic is formed by a voluntary association of individuals; it is a social compact, by which THE WHOLE PEOPLE covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, that all shall be governed by certain laws for the common good." — *Constitution of Massachusetts.*

"WE THE PEOPLE of the State of Rhode Island

and Providence Plantations . . . do ordain and establish this constitution of government." — *Constitution of Rhode Island.*

"THE PEOPLE of Connecticut do, in order more effectually to define, secure, and perpetuate the liberties, rights, and privileges which they have derived from their ancestors, hereby ordain and establish the following constitution and form of civil government." — *Constitution of Connecticut.*

And so on through the constitutions of almost every State in the Union. Our government is, as Lincoln said, "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." There is no escaping it. To question this is to deny the foundations of the American government. Granted that those who framed these provisions may not have understood the full extent of the principles they announced. No matter: they gave us those principles; and, having them, we must apply them.

Now, women may be voters or not, citizens or not; but that they are a part of the people, no one has denied in Christendom — however it may be in Japan, where, as Mrs. Leonowens tells us, the census of population takes in only men, and the women and children are left to be inferred. "WE THE PEOPLE," then, includes women. Be the superstructure what it may, the foundation of the government clearly pro-

vides a place for them: it is impossible to state the national theory in such a way that it shall not include them. It is impossible to deny the natural right of women to vote, except on grounds which exclude all natural right.

The fundamental charters are on our side. There are certain statute limitations which may prove greater or less. But these are temporary and trivial things, always to be interpreted, often to be modified, by reference to the principles of the Constitution. For instance, when a constitutional convention is to be held, or new conditions of suffrage to be created, the whole people should vote upon the matter, including those not hitherto enfranchised. This is the view insisted on, many years since, by that eminent jurist, William Beach Lawrence. He maintained, in a letter to Charles Sumner and in opposition to his own party, that if the question of "negro suffrage" in the Southern States of the Union were put to vote, the colored people themselves had a natural right to vote on the question. The same is true of women. It should never be forgotten by advocates of woman suffrage, that the deeper their reasonings go, the stronger foundation they find; and that we have always a solid fulcrum for our lever in that phrase of our charters, "We the people."

THE USE OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

When young people begin to study geometry, they expect to begin with hard reasoning on the very first page. To their surprise, they find that the early pages are not occupied by reasoning, but by a few simple, easy, and rather commonplace sentences, called "axioms," which are really a set of pegs on which all the reasoning is hung. Pupils are not expected to go back in every demonstration and prove the axioms. If Almira Jones happens to be doing a problem at the blackboard on examination day, at the high school, and remarks in the course of her demonstration that "things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another," and if a sharp questioner jumps up, and says, "How do you know it?" she simply lays down her bit of chalk, and says fearlessly, "That is an axiom," and the teacher sustains her. Some things must be taken for granted.

The same service rendered by axioms in the geometry is supplied in America, as to government, by the simple principles of the Declaration of Independence. Right or wrong, they are taken for granted. Inasmuch as all the legislation of the country is supposed to be based in them, — they stating the theory of our government, while the Constitution itself only puts into organic shape the application, —

we must all begin with them. It is a great advantage, and saves great trouble in all reforms. To the Abolitionists, for instance, what an inestimable labor-saving machine was the Declaration of Independence! Let them have that, and they asked no more. Even the brilliant lawyer Rufus Choate, when confronted with its plain provisions, could only sneer at them as "glittering generalities," which was equivalent to throwing down his brief, and throwing up his case. It was an admission that, if you were so foolish as to insist on applying the first principles of the government, it was all over with him.

Now, the whole doctrine of woman suffrage follows so directly from these same political axioms, that they are especially convenient for women to have in the house. When the Declaration of Independence enumerates as among "self-evident" truths the fact of governments "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed," then that point may be considered as settled. In this school-examination of maturer life, in this grown-up geometry class, the student is not to be called upon by the committee to prove that. She may rightfully lay down her demonstrating chalk, and say, "That is an axiom. You admit that yourselves."

It is a great convenience. We cannot al-

ways be going back, like a Hindoo history, to the foundations of the world. Some things may be taken for granted. How this simple axiom sweeps away, for instance, the cobweb speculations as to whether voting is a natural right, or a privilege delegated by society! No matter which. Take it which way you please. That is an abstract question; but the practical question is a very simple one. "Governments owe their just powers to the consent of the governed." Either that axiom is false, or, whenever women as a class refuse their consent to the present exclusively masculine government, it can no longer claim just powers. The remedy then may be rightly demanded, which the Declaration of Independence goes on to state: "Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

This is the use of the Declaration of Independence. Women, as a class, may not be quite ready to use it. It is the business of this book to help make them ready. But so far as they are ready these plain provisions are the axioms of their political faith. If the axioms

mean anything for men, they mean something for women. If men deride the axioms, it is a concession, like that of Rufus Choate, that these fundamental principles are very much in their way. But so long as the sentences stand in that document they can be made useful. If men try to get away from the arguments of women by saying, "But suppose we have nothing in our theory of government which requires us to grant your demand?" then women can answer, as the straightforward Traddles answered Uriah Heep, "But you have, you know: therefore, if you please, we won't suppose any such thing."

SOME OLD-FASHIONED PRINCIPLES

There has been an effort, lately, to show that when our fathers said, "Taxation without representation is tyranny," they referred not to personal liberties, but to the freedom of a state from foreign power. It is fortunate that this criticism has been made, for it has led to a more careful examination of passages; and this has made it clear, beyond dispute, that the Revolutionary patriots carried their statements more into detail than is generally supposed, and affirmed their principles for individuals, not merely for the state as a whole.

In that celebrated pamphlet by James Otis,

for instance, published as early as 1764, "The Rights of the Colonies Vindicated," he thus clearly lays down the rights of the individual as to taxation: —

"The very act of taxing, exercised over those who are not represented, appears to me to be depriving them of one of their most essential rights as freemen; and, if continued, seems to be, in effect, an entire disfranchisement of every civil right. For what one civil right is worth a rush, after a man's property is subject to be taken from him at pleasure, without his consent? If a man is not his own assessor, in person or by deputy, his liberty is gone, or he is entirely at the mercy of others." [1]

This fine statement has already done duty for liberty, in another contest; for it was quoted by Mr. Sumner in his speech of March 7, 1866, with this commentary: —

"Stronger words for universal suffrage could not be employed. His argument is that if men are taxed without being represented, they are deprived of essential rights; and the continuance of this deprivation despoils them of every civil right, thus making the latter depend upon the right of suffrage, which by a neologism of our day is known as a political right instead of a civil right. Then, to give point to this argument, the patriot insists

[1] Otis, *Rights of the Colonies*, p. 58.

that in determining taxation, 'every man must be his own assessor, in person or by deputy,' without which his liberty is entirely at the mercy of others. Here, again, in a different form, is the original thunderbolt, 'Taxation without representation is tyranny;' and the claim is made not merely for communities, but for 'every man.'"

In a similar way wrote Benjamin Franklin, some six years after, in that remarkable sheet found among his papers, and called "Declaration of those Rights of the Commonalty of Great Britain, without which they cannot be free." The leading propositions were these three: —

"That every man of the commonalty (excepting infants, insane persons, and criminals) is of common right and by the laws of God a freeman, and entitled to the free enjoyment of liberty. That liberty, or freedom, consists in having an actual share in the appointment of those who frame the laws, and who are to be the guardians of every man's life, property, and peace; for the all of one man is as dear to him as the all of another; and the poor man has an equal right, but more need, to have representatives in the legislature than the rich one. That they who have no voice nor vote in the electing of representatives do not enjoy liberty, but are absolutely enslaved to those who have votes, and to their representatives; for to be enslaved is to have governors whom other men

have set over us, and be subject to laws made by the representatives of others, without having had representatives of our own to give consent in our behalf."[1]

In quoting these words of Dr. Franklin, one of his biographers feels moved to add, "These principles, so familiar to us now and so obviously just, were startling and incredible novelties in 1770, abhorrent to nearly all Englishmen, and to great numbers of Americans." Their fair application is still abhorrent to a great many; or else, not willing quite to deny the theory, they limit the application by some such device as "virtual representation." Here, again, James Otis is ready for them; and Charles Sumner is ready to quote Otis, as thus: —

"No such phrase as virtual representation was ever known in law or constitution. It is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd. We must not be cheated by any such phantom, or any other fiction of law or politics, or any monkish trick of deceit or blasphemy."

These are the sharp words used by the patriot Otis, speaking of those who were trying to convince American citizens that they were virtually represented in Parliament. Sumner applied the same principle to the freedmen: it is now applied to women. "Taxation without represen-

[1] Sparks's *Franklin*, ii. 372.

tation is tyranny." "Virtual representation is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd." No ingenuity, no evasion, can give any escape from these plain principles. Either you must revoke the maxims of the American Revolution, or you must enfranchise woman. Stuart Mill well says in his autobiography, "The interest of woman is included in that of man exactly as much (and no more) as that of subjects in that of kings."

FOUNDED ON A ROCK

If there is any one who is recognized as a fair exponent of our national principles, it is our martyr-president Abraham Lincoln; whom Lowell calls, in his noble Commemoration Ode at Cambridge, —

"New birth of our new soil, the first American."

What President Lincoln's political principle was, we know. On his journey to Washington for his first inauguration he said, "I have never had a feeling that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence." To find out what was his view of those sentiments, we must go back several years earlier, and consider that remarkable letter of his to the Boston Republicans who had invited him to join them in celebrating Jefferson's birthday, in April, 1859. It was well called by Charles

Sumner "a gem in political literature;" and it seems to me almost as admirable, in its way, as the Gettysburg address.

"The principles of Jefferson are the definitions and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded with no small show of success. One dashingly calls them 'glittering generalities.' Another bluntly styles them 'self-evident lies.' And others insidiously argue that they apply only to 'superior races.'"

"These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect, — the subverting the principles of free government, and restoring those of classification, caste, and legitimacy. They would delight a convocation of crowned heads plotting against the people. They are the vanguard, the sappers and miners of returning despotism. We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us."

"All honor to Jefferson! — the man who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document *an abstract truth applicable to all men and all times*, and so to embalm it there that to-day and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the harbingers of reappearing tyranny and oppression."

The special "abstract truth" to which President Lincoln thus attaches a value so great, and which he pronounces "applicable to all

men and all times," is evidently the assertion of the Declaration that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, following the assertion that all men are born free and equal; that is, as some one has well interpreted it, equally men. I do not see how any person but a dreamy recluse can deny that the strength of our republic rests on these principles; which are so thoroughly embedded in the average American mind that they take in it, to some extent, the place occupied in the average English mind by the emotion of personal loyalty to a certain reigning family. But it is impossible to defend these principles logically, as Senator Hoar has well pointed out, without recognizing that they are as applicable to women as to men. If this is the case, the claim of women rests on a right, — indeed, upon the same right which is the foundation of all our institutions.

The encouraging fact in the present condition of the whole matter is not that we get more votes here or there for this or that form of woman suffrage — for experience has shown that there are great ups and downs in that respect; and States that at one time seemed nearest to woman suffrage, as Maine and Kansas, now seem quite apathetic. But the real encouragement is that the logical ground is more and

more conceded; and the point now usually made is not that the Jeffersonian maxim excludes women, but that "the consent of the governed" is substantially given by the general consent of women. That this argument has a certain plausibility may be conceded; but it is equally clear that the minority of women, those who do wish to vote, includes on the whole the natural leaders, — those who are foremost in activity of mind, in literature, in art, in good works of charity. It is, therefore, pretty sure that they only predict the opinions of the rest, who will follow them in time. And even while waiting it is a fair question whether the "governed" have not the right to give their votes when they wish, even if the majority of them prefer to stay away from the polls. We do not repeal our naturalization laws, although only the minority of our foreign-born inhabitants as yet take the pains to become naturalized.

THE GOOD OF THE GOVERNED

In Paris, some years ago, I was for a time a resident in a cultivated French family, where the father was non-committal in politics, the mother and son were republicans, and the daughter was a Bonapartist. Asking the mother why the young lady thus held to a different creed from the

rest, I was told that she had made up her mind that the streets of Paris were kept cleaner under the empire than since its disappearance: hence her imperialism.

I have heard American men advocate the French empire at home and abroad, without offering reasons so good as those of the lively French maiden. But I always think of her remark when the question is seriously asked, as Mr. Parkman, for instance, once gravely put it in "The North American Review," — "The real issue is this: Is the object of government the good of the governed, or is it not?" Taken in a general sense, there is probably no disposition to discuss this conundrum, for the simple reason that nobody dissents from it. But the important point is: What does "the good of the governed" mean? Does it merely mean better street cleaning, or something more essential?

There is nothing new in the distinction. Ever since De Tocqueville wrote his "Democracy in America," forty years ago, this precise point has been under active discussion. That acute writer himself recurs to it again and again. Every government, he points out, nominally seeks the good of the people, and rests on their will at last. But there is this difference: A monarchy organizes better, does its work

better, cleans the streets better. Nevertheless De Tocqueville, a monarchist, sees this advantage in a republic, that when all this is done by the people for themselves, although the work done may be less perfect, yet the people themselves are more enlightened, better satisfied, and, in the end, their good is better served. Thus in one place he quotes "a writer of talent" who complains of the want of administrative perfection in the United States, and says, "We are indebted to centralization, that admirable invention of a great man, for the uniform order and method which prevails alike in all the municipal budgets (of France) from the largest town to the humblest commune." But, says De Tocqueville, —

"Whatever may be my admiration of this result, when I see the communes (municipalities) of France, with their excellent system of accounts, plunged in the grossest ignorance of their true interests, and abandoned to so incorrigible an apathy that they seem to vegetate rather than to live; when, on the other hand, I observe the activity, the information, and the spirit of enterprise which keeps society in perpetual labor, in these American townships, whose budgets are drawn up with small method and with still less uniformity, — I am struck by the spectacle; *for, to my mind, the end of a good government is to insure the welfare of a people,*

and not to establish order and regularity in the midst of its misery and its distress."[1]

The italics are my own; but it will be seen that he uses a phrase almost identical with Mr. Parkman's, and that he uses it to show that there is something to be looked at beyond good laws, — namely, the beneficial effect of self-government. In another place he comes back to the subject again: —

"It is incontestable that the people frequently conducts public business very ill; but it is impossible that the lower order should take a part in public business without extending the circle of their ideas, and without quitting the ordinary routine of their mental acquirements; the humblest individual who is called upon to coöperate in the government of society acquires a certain degree of self-respect; and, as he possesses authority, he can command the services of minds much more enlightened than his own. He is canvassed by a multitude of applicants, who seek to deceive him in a thousand different ways, but who instruct him by their deceit. . . . Democracy does not confer the most skilful kind of government upon the people; but it produces that which the most skilful governments are frequently unable to awaken, namely, an all-pervading and restless activity, a superabundant force, and an energy which is inseparable from it, and which may, under favorable circumstances, beget the most

[1] Reeves's translation, London, 1838, vol. i. p. 97, note.

amazing benefits. These are the true advantages of democracy." [1]

These passages and others like them are worth careful study. They clearly point out the two different standards by which we may criticise all political systems. One class of thinkers, of whom Froude is the most conspicuous, holds that the "good of the people" means good laws and good administration, and that, if these are only provided, it makes no sort of difference whether they themselves make the laws, or whether some Cæsar or Louis Napoleon provides them. All the traditions of the early and later Federalists point this way. But it has always seemed to me a theory of government essentially incompatible with American institutions. If we could once get our people saturated with it, they would soon be at the mercy of some Louis Napoleon of their own.

When President Lincoln claimed, following Theodore Parker, that ours was not merely a government for the people, but of the people, and by the people as well, he recognized the other side of the matter, — that it is not only important what laws we have, but who makes the laws; and that "the end of a good government is to insure the welfare of a people," in

[1] De Tocqueville, vol. ii. pp. 74, 75.

this far wider sense. That advantage which the French writer admits in democracy, that it develops force, energy, and self-respect, is as essentially a part of "the good of the governed" as is any perfection in the details of government. And it is precisely these advantages which we expect that women, sooner or later, are to share. For them, as for men, "the good of the governed" is not genuine unless it is that kind of good which belongs to the self-governed.

RULING AT SECOND-HAND

In the last century the bitter satirist, Charles Churchill, wrote a verse which will do something to keep alive his name. It is as follows: —

> "Women ruled all; and ministers of state
> Were at the doors of women forced to wait, —
> Women, who 've oft as sovereigns graced the land,
> But never governed well at second-hand."

He touches the very kernel of the matter, and all history is on his side. The Salic Law excluded women from the throne of France, — "the kingdom of France being too noble to be governed by a woman," as it said. Accordingly the history of France shows one long line of royal mistresses ruling in secret for mischief; while more liberal England points to the reigns of Elizabeth and Anne and Victoria, to show how usefully a woman may sit upon a throne.

It was one of the merits of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, that she always pointed out this distinction. "Any woman can have influence," she said, "in some way. She need only to be a good cook or a good scold, to secure that. Woman should not merely have a share in the power of man, — for of that omnipotent Nature will not suffer her to be defrauded, — but it should be a *chartered* power, too fully recognized to be abused." We have got to meet, at any rate, this fact of feminine influence in the world. Demosthenes said that the measures which a statesman had meditated for a year might be overturned in a day by a woman. How infinitely more sensible then, to train the woman herself in statesmanship, and give her open responsibility as well as concealed power!

The same demoralizing principle of subordination runs through the whole position of women. Many a husband makes of his wife a doll, dresses her in fine clothes, gives or withholds money according to his whims, and laughs or frowns if she asks any questions about his business. If only a petted slave, she naturally develops the vices of a slave; and when she wants more money for more fine clothes, and finds her husband out of humor, she coaxes, cheats, and lies. Many a woman half ruins her husband by her extravagance, simply because

he has never told her frankly what his income is, or treated her, in money matters, like a rational being. Bankruptcy, perhaps, brings both to their senses; and thenceforward the husband discovers that his wife is a woman, not a child. But for want of this whole families and generations of women are trained to deception. I knew an instance where a fashionable dressmaker in New York urged an economical young girl, about to be married, to buy of her a costly *trousseau* or wedding outfit. "But I have not the money," said the maiden. "No matter," said the complaisant tempter: "I will wait four years, and send in the bill to your husband by degrees. Many ladies do it." Fancy the position of a pure young girl, wishing innocently to make herself beautiful in the eyes of her husband, and persuaded to go into his house with a trick like this upon her conscience! Yet it grows directly out of the whole theory of life which is preached to many women, — that all they seek must be won by indirect manœuvres, and not by straightforward living.

It is a mistaken system. Once recognize woman as born to be the equal, not inferior, of man, and she accepts as a right her share of the family income, of political power, and of all else that is capable of distribution. As it is, we are in danger of forgetting that woman, in mind as

in body, was born to be upright. The women of Charles Reade — never by any possibility moving in a straight line where it is possible to find a crooked one — are distorted women ; and Nature is no more responsible for them than for the figures produced by tight lacing and by high-heeled boots. These physical deformities acquire a charm, when the taste adjusts itself to them ; and so do those pretty tricks and those interminable lies. But after all, to make a noble woman you must give a noble training.

VIII

SUFFRAGE

"No such phrase as virtual representation was ever known in law or constitution. It is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd. We must not be cheated by any such phantom or any other trick of law and politics." — JAMES OTIS, quoted by Charles Sumner in speech, March 7, 1866.

DRAWING THE LINE

When in Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby" the coal-heaver calls at the fashionable barber's to be shaved, the barber declines that service. The coal-heaver pleads that he saw a baker being shaved there the day before. But the barber points out to him that it is necessary to draw the line somewhere, and he draws it at bakers.

It is, doubtless, an inconvenience, in respect to woman suffrage, that so many people have their own theories as to drawing the line, and deciding who shall vote. Each has his hobby; and as the opportunity for applying it to men has passed by, each wishes to catch at the last remaining chance, and apply it to women. One believes in drawing an educational line; another,

in a property qualification; another, in new restrictions on naturalization; another, in distinctions of race; and each wishes to keep women, for a time, as the only remaining victims for his experiment.

Fortunately the answer to all these objections, on behalf of woman suffrage, is very brief and simple. It is no more the business of its advocates to decide upon the best abstract basis for suffrage, than it is to decide upon the best system of education, or of labor, or of marriage. Its business is to equalize, in all these directions; nothing more. When that is done, there will be plenty still left to do, without doubt; but it will not involve the rights of women, as such. Simply to strike out the word "male" from the statute, — that is our present work. "What is sauce for the goose" — but the proverb is somewhat musty. These educational and property restrictions may be of value; but wherever they are already removed from the men they must be removed from women also. Enfranchise them equally, and then begin afresh, if you please, to legislate for the whole human race. What we protest against is that you should have let down the bars for one sex, and should at once become conscientiously convinced that they should be put up again for the other.

When it was proposed to apply an educational qualification at the South after the war, the Southern white loyalists all objected to it. If you make it universal, they said, it cuts off many of the whites. If you apply it to the blacks alone, it is manifestly unjust. The case is the same with women in regard to men. As woman needs the ballot primarily to protect herself, it is manifestly unjust to restrict the suffrage for her, when man has it without restriction. If she needs protection, then she needs it all the more from being poor, or ignorant, or Irish, or black. If we do not see this, the freedwomen of the South did. There is nothing like personal wrong to teach people logic.

We hear a great deal said in dismay, and sometimes even by old abolitionists, about "increasing the number of ignorant voters." In Massachusetts, there is an educational restriction for men, such as it is; in Rhode Island, a property qualification is required for voting on certain questions. Personally, I believe with "Warrington," that, if ignorant voting be bad, ignorant non-voting is worse; and that the enfranchised "masses," which have a legitimate outlet for their political opinions, are far less dangerous than disfranchised masses, which must rely on mobs and strikes. I will go

farther, and say that I believe our republic is, on the whole, in less danger from its poor men, who have got to stay in it and bring up their children, than from its rich men, who have always Paris and London to fall back upon. I do not see that even a poll-tax or registry-tax is of any use as a safeguard; for if men are to be bought the tax merely offers a more indirect and palatable form in which to pay the price. Many a man consents to have his poll-tax paid by his party or his candidate, when he would reject the direct offer of a dollar bill.

But this is all private speculation, and has nothing to do with the woman-suffrage movement. All that we can ask, as advocates of this reform, is that the inclusion or the exclusion should be the same for both sexes. We cannot put off the equality of woman till that time, a few centuries hence, when the Social Science Association shall have succeeded in agreeing on the true basis of "scientific legislation." It is as if we urged that wives should share their husbands' dinners, and were told that the physicians had not decided whether beefsteak were wholesome. The answer is, "Beefsteak or tripe, yeast or saleratus, which you please. But, meanwhile, what is good enough for the wife is good enough for the husband."

FOR SELF-PROTECTION

I remember to have read, many years ago, the life of Sir Samuel Romilly, the English philanthropist. He was the author of more beneficent legal reforms than any man of his day, and there was in that very book a long list of the changes he still meant to bring about. It struck me very much, that among these proposed reforms not one of any importance referred to the laws about women.

It shows — what all experience has shown — that no class or race or sex can safely trust its protection in any hands but its own. The laws of England in regard to woman were then so bad that Lord Brougham afterwards said they needed total reconstruction, if they were to be touched at all. Yet it is only since woman suffrage began to be talked about, that the work of law-reform has really taken firm hold. In many cases in America the beneficent measures are directly to be traced to some appeal from feminine advocates. Even in Canada, as was once stated by Dr. Cameron of Toronto, the bill protecting the property of married women was passed under the immediate pressure of Lucy Stone's eloquence. And even where this direct agency could not be traced, the general fact that the atmosphere was full of the agitation had much to do with all the

reforms that took place. Legislatures, unwilling to give woman the ballot, were shamed into giving her something. The chairman of the judiciary committee in Rhode Island told me that until he heard women argue before the committee he had not reflected upon their legal disabilities, or thought how unjust these were. While the matter was left to the other sex only, even men like Sir Samuel Romilly forgot the wrongs of woman. When she began to advocate her own cause men also waked up.

But now that they are awake they ask, Is not this sufficient? Not at all. If an agent who has cheated you surrenders reluctantly one half your stolen goods, you do not stop there and say, "It is enough. Your intention is honorable. Please continue my agent with increased pay." On the contrary, you say, "Your admission of wrong is a plea of guilty. Give me the rest of what is mine." There is no defence like self-defence, no protection like self-protection.

All theories of chivalry and generosity and vicarious representation fall before the fact that woman has been grossly wronged by man. That being the case, the only modest and honest thing for man to do is to say, "Henceforward have a voice in making your own laws." Till this is done, she has no sure safeguard, since otherwise the same men who made the

old barbarous laws may at any time restore them.

It is common to say that woman suffrage will make no great difference; that women will think very much as men do, and it will simply double the vote without varying the result. About many matters this may be true. To be sure, it is probable that on questions of conscience, like slavery and temperance, the woman's vote would by no means coincide with man's. But grant that it would. The fact remains, — and all history shows it, — that on all that concerns her own protection a woman needs her own vote. Would a woman vote to give her husband the power of bequeathing her children to the control and guardianship of somebody else? Would a woman vote to sustain the law by which a Massachusetts chief justice bade the police take those crying children from their mother's side in the Boston court-room a few years ago, and hand them over to a comparative stranger, because that mother had married again? You might as well ask whether the colored vote would sustain the Dred Scott decision. Tariffs or banks may come or go the same, whether the voters be white or black, male or female; but when the wrongs of an oppressed class or sex are to be righted the ballot is the only guaranty. After they have

gained a potential voice for themselves, the Sir Samuel Romillys will remember them.

WOMANLY STATESMANSHIP

The newspapers periodically express a desire to know whether women have given evidence, on the whole, of superior statesmanship to men. There are constant requests that they will define their position as to the tariff and the fisheries and the civil-service question. If they do not speak, it is naturally assumed that they will forever after hold their peace. Let us see how that matter stands.

It is said that the greatest mechanical skill in America is to be found among professional burglars who come here from England. Suppose one of these men were in prison, and we were to stand outside and taunt him through the window: "Here is a locomotive engine: why do you not mend or manage it? Here is a steam printing-press: if you know anything, set it up for me! You a mechanic, when you have not proved that you understand any of these things? Nonsense!"

But Jack Sheppard, if he condescended to answer us at all, would coolly say, "Wait a while, till I have finished my present job. Being in prison, my first business is to get out of prison. Wait till I have picked this lock, and

mined this wall; wait till I have made a saw out of a watch-spring, and a ladder out of a pair of blankets. Let me do my first task, and get out of limbo, and then see if your little printing-presses and locomotives are too puzzling for my fingers."

Politically speaking, woman is in jail, and her first act of skill must be in getting through the wall. For her there is no tariff question, no problem of the fisheries. She will come to that by and by, if you please; but for the present her statesmanship must be employed nearer home. The "civil-service reform" in which she is most concerned is a reform which shall bring her in contact with the civil service. Her political creed, for the present, is limited to that of Sterne's starling in the cage, — "I can't get out." If she is supposed to have any common-sense at all, she will best show it by beginning at the point where she is, instead of at the point where somebody else is. She would indeed be as foolish as these editors think her if she now spent her brains upon the tariff question, which she cannot reach, instead of upon her own enfranchisement, which she is gradually reaching.

The woman-suffrage movement in America, in all its stages and subdivisions, has been the work of woman. No doubt men have helped in it: much of the talking has been done by

them, and they have furnished many of the printed documents. But the energy, the methods, the unwearied purpose, of the movement, have come from women: they have led in all councils; they have established the newspapers, got up the conventions, addressed the legislatures, and raised the money. Thirty years have shown, with whatever temporary variations, one vast wave of progress toward success, both in this country and in Europe. Now success is statesmanship.

I remember well the shouts of laughter that used to greet the anti-slavery orators when they claimed that the real statesmen of the country were not the Clays and Calhouns, who spent their strength in trying to sustain slavery, and failed, but the Garrisons, who devoted their lives to its overthrow, and were succeeding. Yet who now doubts this? Tried by the same standard, the statesmanship of to-day does not lie in the men who can find no larger questions before them than those which concern the fisheries, but in the women whose far-reaching efforts will one day make every existing voting-list so much waste paper.

Of course, when the voting-lists with the women's names are ready to be printed, it will be interesting to speculate as to how these new monarchs of our destiny will use their power.

For myself, a long course of observation in the anti-slavery and woman-suffrage movements has satisfied me that women are not idiots, and that, on the whole, when they give their minds to a question, whether moral or practical, they understand it quite as readily as men. In the anti-slavery movement it is certain that a woman, Elizabeth Heyrick, gave the first impulse to its direct and simple solution in England; and that another woman, Mrs. Stowe, did more than any man, except perhaps Garrison and John Brown, to secure its right solution here. There was never a moment, I am confident, when any great political question growing out of the anti-slavery struggle might not have been put to vote more safely among the women of New England than among the clergy, or the lawyers, or the college professors. If they did so well in that great issue, it is fair to assume that, after they have a sufficient inducement to study out future issues, they at least will not be very much behind the men.

But we cannot keep it too clearly in view, that the whole question, whether women would vote better or worse than men on general questions, is a minor matter. It was equally a minor matter in case of the negroes. We gave the negroes the ballot, simply because they needed it for their own protection; and we shall

by and by give it to women for the same reason. Tried by that test, we shall find that their statesmanship will be genuine. When they come into power, drunken husbands will no longer control their wives' earnings, and a chief justice will no longer order a child to be removed from its mother, amid its tears and outcries, merely because that mother has married again. And if, as we are constantly assured, woman's first duty is to her home and her children, she may count it a good beginning in statesmanship to secure to herself the means of protecting both. That once settled, it will be time enough to "interview" her in respect to the proper rate of duty on pig-iron.

TOO MUCH PREDICTION

"Seek not to proticipate," says Mrs. Gamp, the venerable nurse in "Martin Chuzzlewit" — "but take 'em as they come, and as they go." I am persuaded that our woman-suffrage arguments would be improved by this sage counsel, and that at present we indulge in too many bold anticipations.

Is there not altogether too much tendency to predict what women will do when they vote? Could that good time come to-morrow, we should be startled to find to how many different opinions and "causes" the new voters were

already pledged. One speaker wishes that women should be emancipated, because of the fidelity with which they are sure to support certain desirable measures, as peace, order, freedom, temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come. Then the next speaker has his or her schedule of political virtues and is equally confident that women, if once enfranchised, will guarantee clear majorities for them all. The trouble is that we thus mortgage this new party of the future, past relief, beyond possibility of payment, and incur the ridicule of the unsanctified by committing our cause to a great many contradictory pledges.

I know an able and high-minded woman of foreign birth, who courageously, but as I think mistakenly, calls herself an atheist, and who has for years advocated woman suffrage as the only antidote to the rule of the clergy. On the other hand, an able speaker in a Boston convention soon after advocated the same thing as the best way of defeating atheism, and securing the positive assertion of religion by the community. Both cannot be correct: neither is entitled to speak for woman. That being the case, would it not be better to keep clear of this dangerous ground of prediction, and keep to the argument based on rights and needs? If our theory of government be worth any-

thing, woman has the same right to the ballot that man has: she certainly needs it as much for self-defence. How she will use it, when she gets it, is her own affair. It may be that she will use it more wisely than her brothers; but I am satisfied to believe that she will use it as well. Let us not attribute infallible wisdom and virtue, even to women; for, as dear Mrs. Poyser says in "Adam Bede," "God Almighty made some of 'em foolish, to match the men."

It is common to assume, for instance, that all women by nature favor peace; and that, even if they do not always seem to promote it in their social walk and conversation, they certainly will in their political. When we consider how all the pleasing excitements, achievements, and glories of war, such as they are, accrue to men only, and how large a part of the miseries are brought home to women, it might seem that their vote on this matter, at least, would be a sure thing. Thus far the theory: the fact being that we have been through a civil war which convulsed the nation, and cost half a million lives; and which was, from the very beginning, fomented, stimulated, and applauded, at least on one side, by the united voice of the women. It will be generally admitted by those who know, that, but for the women of the seceding States, the war of the Rebellion would have been waged

more feebly, been sooner ended, and far more easily forgotten. Nay, I was told a few days since by an able Southern lawyer, who was long the mayor of one of the largest Southern cities, that in his opinion the practice of duelling — which is an epitome of war — owes its continued existence at the South to a sustaining public sentiment among the fair sex.

Again, where the sympathy of women is wholly on the side of right, it is by no means safe to assume that their mode of enforcing that sentiment will be equally judicious. Take, for instance, the temperance cause. It is quite common to assume that women are a unit on that question. When we look at the two extremes of society, — the fine lady pressing wine upon her visitors, and the Irishwoman laying in a family supply of whiskey to last over Sunday, — the assumption seems hasty. But grant it. Is it equally sure, that when woman takes hold of that most difficult of all legislation, the license and prohibitory laws, she will handle them more wisely than men have done? Will her more ardent zeal solve the problem on which so much zeal has already been lavished in vain? In large cities, for instance, where there is already more law than is enforced, will her additional ballots afford the means to enforce it? It may be so; but it seems wiser

not to predict nor to anticipate, but to wait and hope.

It is no reproach on woman to say that she is not infallible on particular questions. There is much reason to suppose that in politics, as in every other sphere, the joint action of the sexes will be better and wiser than that of either singly. It seems obvious that the experiment of republican government will be more fairly tried when one half the race is no longer disfranchised. It is quite certain, at any rate, that no class can trust its rights to the mercy and chivalry of any other, but that, the weaker it is, the more it needs all political aids and securities for self-protection. Thus far we are on safe ground; and here, as it seems to me, the claim for suffrage may securely rest. To go farther in our assertions seems to me unsafe, although many of our wisest and most eloquent may differ from me; and the nearer we approach success, the more important it is to look to our weapons. It is a plausible and tempting argument, to claim suffrage for woman on the ground that she is an angel; but I think it will prove wiser, in the end, to claim it for her as being human.

FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGES

In a hotly contested municipal election, the other day, an active political manager was telling me his tactics. "We have to send carriages for some of the voters," he said. "First-class carriages! If we undertake to wait on 'em, we must do it in good shape, and not leave the best carriages to be hired by the other party."

I am not much given to predicting just what will happen when women vote; but I confidently assert that they will be taken to the polls, if they wish, in first-class carriages. If the best horses are to be harnessed, and the best cushions selected, and every panel of the coach rubbed till you can see your face in it, merely to accommodate some elderly man who lives two blocks away, and could walk to the polls very easily, then how much more will these luxuries be placed at the service of every woman, young or old, whose presence at the polls is made doubtful by mud, or snow, or the prospect of a shower.

But the carriage is only the beginning of the polite attentions that will soon appear. When we see the transformation undergone by every ferryboat and every railway station, so soon as it comes to be frequented by women, who can doubt that voting-places will experience the same change? They will soon have — at least

in the "ladies' department" — elegance instead of discomfort, beauty for ashes, plenty of rocking-chairs, and no need of spittoons. Very possibly they may have all the modern conveniences and inconveniences, — furnace registers, teakettles, Washington pies, and a young lady to give checks for bundles. Who knows what elaborate comforts, what queenly luxuries, may be offered to women at voting-places, when the time has finally arrived to sue for their votes?

The common impression has always been quite different from this. People look at the coarseness and dirt now visible at so many voting-places, and say, "Would you expose women to all that?" But these places are not dirtier than a railway smoking-car; and there is no more coarseness than in any ferryboat which is, for whatever reason, used by men only. You do not look into those places, and say with indignation, "Never, if I can help it, shall my wife or my beloved great-grandmother travel by steamboat or by rail!" You know that with these exemplary relatives will enter order and quiet, carpets and curtains, brooms and dusters. Why should it be otherwise with ward rooms and town halls?

There is not an atom more of intrinsic difficulty in providing a decorous ladies' room for a voting-place, than for a post-office or a railway

station; and it is as simple a thing to vote a ticket as to buy one. This being thus easily practicable, all men will desire to provide it. And the example of the first-class carriages shows that the parties will vie with each other in these pleasing arrangements. They will be driven to it, whether they wish it or not. The party which has most consistently and resolutely kept woman away from the ballot-box will be the very party compelled, for the sake of self-preservation, to make her "rights" agreeable to her when once she gets them. A few stupid or noisy men may indeed try to make the polls unattractive to her, the very first time; but the result of this little experiment will be so disastrous that the offenders will be sternly suppressed by their own party leaders, before another election day comes. It will soon become clear, that of all possible ways of losing votes the surest lies in treating women rudely.

Lucy Stone tells a story of a good man in Kansas who, having done all he could to prevent women from being allowed to vote on school questions, was finally comforted, when that measure passed, by the thought that he should at least secure his wife's vote for a pet schoolhouse of his own. Election day came, and the newly enfranchised matron showed the most

culpable indifference to her privileges. She made breakfast as usual, went about her housework, and did on that perilous day precisely the things that her anxious husband had always predicted that women never would do under such circumstances. His hints and advice found no response; and nothing short of the best pair of horses and the best wagon finally sufficed to take the farmer's wife to the polls. I am not the least afraid that women will find voting a rude or disagreeable arrangement. There is more danger of their being treated too well, and being too much attacked and allured by these cheap cajoleries. But women are pretty shrewd, and can probably be trusted to go to the polls, even in first-class carriages.

EDUCATION *via* SUFFRAGE

I know a rich bachelor of large property who fatigues his friends by perpetual denunciations of everything American, and especially of universal suffrage. He rarely votes; and I was much amazed, when the popular vote was to be taken on building an expensive schoolhouse, to see him go to the polls, and vote in the affirmative. On being asked his reason, he explained that, while we labored under the calamity of universal (male) suffrage, he thought it best to mitigate its evils by educating the voters. In short,

he wished, as Mr. Lowe said in England when the last Reform Bill passed, "to prevail upon our future masters to learn their alphabets."

These motives may not be generous; but the schoolhouses, when they are built, are just as useful. Even girls get the benefit of them, though the long delay in many places before girls got their share came in part from the want of this obvious stimulus. It is universal male suffrage that guarantees schoolhouse and school. The most selfish man understands that argument: "We must educate the masses, if it is only to keep them from our throats."

But there is a wider way in which suffrage guarantees education. At every election time political information is poured upon the whole voting community till it is deluged. Presses run night and day to print newspaper extras; clerks sit up all night to send out congressional speeches; the most eloquent men in the community expound the most difficult matters to the ignorant. Of course each party affords only its own point of view; but every man has a neighbor who is put under treatment by some other party, and who is constantly attacking all who will listen to his provoking and pestilent counter-statements. All the common school education of the United States does not equal the education of election day; and as in some

States elections are held very often, this popular university seems to be kept in session almost the whole year round. The consequence is a remarkable average popular knowledge of political affairs, — a training which American women now miss, but which will come to them with the ballot.

And in still another way there will be an education coming to woman from the right of suffrage. It will come from her own sex, proceeding from highest to lowest. We often hear it said that after enfranchisement the more educated women will not vote, while the ignorant will. But Mrs. Howe admirably pointed out, at a Philadelphia convention, that the moment women have the ballot it will become the pressing duty of the more educated women, even in self-protection, to train the rest. The very fact of the danger will be a stimulus to duty, with women, as it already is with men.

It has always seemed to me rather childish, in a man of superior education, or talent, or wealth, to complain that when election day comes he has no more votes than the man who plants his potatoes or puts in his coal. The truth is that under the most thorough system of universal suffrage the man of wealth or talent or natural leadership has still a disproportionate influence, still casts a hundred votes where the

poor or ignorant or feeble man throws but one. Even the outrages of New York elections turned out to be caused by the fact that the leading rogues had used their brains and energy, while the men of character had not. When it came to the point, it was found that a few caricatures by Nast and a few columns of figures in the "Times" were more than a match for all the repeaters of the ring. It is always so. Andrew Johnson, with all the patronage of the nation, had not the influence of "Nasby" with his one newspaper. The whole Chinese question was perceptibly and instantly modified when Harte wrote "The Heathen Chinee."

These things being so, it indicates feebleness or dyspepsia when an educated man is heard whining, about election time, with his fears of ignorant voting. It is his business to enlighten and control that ignorance. With a voice and a pen at his command, with a town hall in every town for the one, and a newspaper in every village for the other, he has such advantages over his ignorant neighbors that the only doubt is whether his privileges are not greater than he deserves. For one, in writing for the press, I am impressed by the undue greatness, not by the littleness, of the power I wield. And what is true of men will be true of women. If the educated women of America have not brains

or energy enough to control, in the long run, the votes of the ignorant women around them, they will deserve a severe lesson, and will be sure, like the men in New York, to receive it. And thenceforward they will educate and guide that ignorance, instead of evading or cringing before it.

But I have no fear about the matter. It is a libel on American women to say that they will not go anywhere or do anything which is for the good of their children and their husbands. Travel West on any of our great lines of railroad, and see what women undergo in transporting their households to their new homes. See the watching and the feeding, and the endless answers to the endless questions, and the toil to keep little Sarah warm, and little Johnny cool, and the baby comfortable. What a hungry, tired, jaded, forlorn mass of humanity it is, as the sun rises on it each morning, in the soiled and breathless railway-car! Yet that household group is America in the making; those are the future kings and queens, the little princes and princesses, of this land. Now, is the mother who has undergone for the transportation of these children all this enormous labor to shrink at her journey's end from the slight additional labor of going to the polls to vote whether those little ones shall have schools or

rumshops? The thought is an absurdity. A few fine ladies in cities will fear to spoil their silk dresses, as a few foppish gentlemen now fear for their broadcloth. But the mass of intelligent American women will vote, as do the mass of men.

FOLLOW YOUR LEADERS

"There go thirty thousand men," shouted the Portuguese, as Wellington, with a few staff-officers, rode along the mountain-side. The action of the leaders' minds, in any direction, has a value out of all proportion to their numbers. In a campaign there is a council of officers, — Grant and Sherman and Sheridan perhaps. They are but a trifling minority, yet what they plan the whole army will do; and such is the faith in a real leader, that, were all the restraints of discipline for the moment relaxed, the rank and file would still follow his judgment. What a few general officers see to be the best to-day, the sergeants and corporals and private soldiers will usually see to be best to-morrow.

In peace, also, there is a silent leadership; only that in peace, as there is more time to spare, the leaders are expected to persuade the rank and file, instead of commanding them. Yet it comes to the same thing in the end. The movement begins with certain guides, and if

you wish to know the future, keep your eye on them. If you wish to know what is already decided, ask the majority; but if you wish to find out what is likely to be done next, ask the leaders.

It is constantly said that the majority of women do not yet desire to vote, and it is true. But to find out whether they are likely to wish for it, we must keep our eyes on the women who lead their sex. The representative women, — those who naturally stand for the rest, those most eminent for knowledge and self-devotion, — how do they view the thing? The rank and file do not yet demand the ballot, you say; but how is it with the general officers?

Now, it is a remarkable fact, about which those who have watched this movement for twenty years can hardly be mistaken, that almost any woman who reaches a certain point of intellectual or moral development will presently be found desiring the ballot for her sex. If this be so, it predicts the future. It is the judgment of Grant and Sherman and Sheridan as against that of the average private soldier of the Two Hundredth Infantry. Set aside, if you please, the specialists of this particular agitation, — those who were first known to the public through its advocacy. There is no just reason why they should be set aside, yet con-

cede that for a moment. The fact remains that the ablest women in the land — those who were recognized as ablest in other spheres, before they took this particular duty upon them — are extremely apt to assume this cross when they reach a certain stage of development.

When Margaret Fuller first came forward into literature, she supposed that literature was all she wanted. It was not till she came to write upon woman's position that she discovered what woman needed. Clara Barton, driving her ambulance or her supply wagon at the battle's edge, did not foresee, perhaps, that she should make that touching appeal, when the battle was over, imploring her own enfranchisement from the soldiers she had befriended. Lydia Maria Child, Julia Ward Howe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Louisa Alcott, came to the claim for the ballot earlier than a million others, because they were the intellectual leaders of American womanhood. They saw farthest, because they were in the highest place. They were the recognized representatives of their sex before they gave in their adhesion to the new demand. Their judgment is as the judgment of the council of officers, while Flora McFlimsey's opinion is as the opinion of John Smith, unassigned recruit. But if the generals make arrangements for a battle, the chance is that

John Smith will have to take a hand in it, or else run away.

It is a rare thing for the petition for suffrage from any town to comprise the majority of women in that town. It makes no difference: if there are few women in the town who want to vote, there is as much propriety in their voting as if there were ten millions, so long as the majority are equally protected in their right to stay at home. But when the names of petitioners come to be weighed as well as counted, the character, the purity, the intelligence, the social and domestic value of the petitioners is seldom denied. The women who wish to vote are not the idle, the ignorant, the narrow-minded, or the vicious; they are not "the dangerous classes:" they represent the best class in the community, when tried by the highest standard. They are the natural leaders. What they now see to be right will also be perceived even by the foolish and the ignorant by and by.

In a poultry-yard in spring, when the first brood of ducklings goes toddling to the water-side, no doubt all the younger or feebler broods, just hatched out of similar eggs, think these innovators dreadfully mistaken. "You are out of place," they feebly pipe. "See how happy we are in our safe nests. Perhaps, by and by, when properly introduced into society, we may run

about a little on land, but to swim! — never!" Meanwhile their elder kindred are splashing and diving in ecstasy; and, so surely as they are born ducklings, all the rest will swim in their turn. The instinct of the first duck solves the problem for all the rest. It is a mere question of time. Sooner or later, all the broods in the most conservative yard will follow their leaders.

HOW TO MAKE WOMEN UNDERSTAND POLITICS

An English member of Parliament said in a speech, some years ago, that the stupidest man had a clearer understanding of political questions than the brightest woman. He did not find it convenient to say what must be the condition of a nation which for many years has had a woman for its sovereign; but he certainly said bluntly what many men feel. It is not indeed very hard to find the source of this feeling. It is not merely that women are inexperienced in questions of finance or administrative practice, for many men are equally ignorant of these. But it is undoubtedly true of a large class of more fundamental questions, — as, for instance, of some now pending at Washington, — which even many clear-headed women find it hard to understand, while men of far less general training comprehend them entirely.

Questions of the distribution of power, for instance, between the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government, — or between the United States government and those of the separate States, — belong to the class I mean. Many women of great intelligence show a hazy indistinctness of views when the question arises whether it is the business of the general government to preserve order at the voting-places at a congressional election, for instance, as the Republicans hold; or whether it should be left absolutely in the hands of the state officials, as the Democrats maintain. Most women would probably say that so long as order was preserved, it made very little difference who did it. Yet, if one goes into a shoe-shop or a blacksmith's shop, one may hear just these questions discussed in all their bearings by uneducated men, and it will be seen that they involve a principle. Why is this difference? Does it show some constitutional inferiority in women, as to this particular faculty?

The question is best solved by considering a case somewhat parallel. The South Carolina negroes were considered very stupid, even by many who knew them; and they certainly were densely ignorant on many subjects. Put face to face with a difficult point of finance legislation, I think they would have been found to

know even less about it than I do. Yet the abolition of slavery was held in those days by many great statesmen to be a subject so difficult that they shrank from discussing it; and nevertheless I used to find that these ignorant men understood it quite clearly in all its bearings. Offer a bit of sophistry to them, try to blind them with false logic on this subject, and they would detect it as promptly, and answer it as keenly, as Garrison or Phillips would have done; and, indeed, they would give very much the same answers. What was the reason? Not that they were half wise and half stupid; but that they were dull where their own interests had not trained them, and they were sharp and keen where their own interests were concerned.

I have no doubt that it will be so with women when they vote. About some things they will be slow to learn; but about all that immediately concerns themselves they will know more at the very beginning than many wise men have learned since the world began. How long it took for English-speaking men to correct, even partially, the iniquities of the old common law! — but a parliament of women would have set aside at a single sitting the alleged right of the husband to correct his wife with a stick no bigger than his thumb. It took

the men of a certain State of this Union a good many years to see that it was an outrage to confiscate to the State one half the property of a man who died childless, leaving his widow only the other half; but a legislature of women would have annihilated that enormity by a single day's work. I have never seen reason to believe that women on general questions would act more wisely or more conscientiously, as a rule, than men: but self-preservation is a wonderful quickener of the brain; and in all questions bearing on their own rights and opportunities as women, it is they who will prove shrewd and keen, and men who will prove obtuse, as indeed they have usually been.

Another point that adds force to this is the fact that wherever women, by their special position, have more at stake than usual in public affairs, even as now organized, they are apt to be equal to the occasion. When the men of South Carolina were ready to go to war for the "State-Rights" doctrines of Calhoun, the women of that State had also those doctrines at their fingers'-ends. At Washington, where politics make the breath of life, you will often find the wives of members of Congress following the debates, and noting every point gained or lost, because these are matters in which they and their families are personally concerned;

and as for that army of women employed in the "departments" of the government, they are politicians every one, because their bread depends upon it.

The inference is, that if women as a class are now unfitted for politics it is because they have not that pressure of personal interest and responsibility by which men are unconsciously trained. Give this, and self-interest will do the rest, aided by that power of conscience and affection which is certainly not less in them than in men, even if we claim no more. A young lady of my acquaintance opposed woman suffrage in conversation on various grounds, one of which was that it would, if enacted, compel her to read the newspapers, which she greatly disliked. I pleaded that this was not a fatal objection; since many men voted "early and often" without reading them, and in fact without knowing how to read at all. She said, in reply, that this might do for men, but that women were far more conscientious, and, if they were once compelled to vote, they would wish to know what they were voting for. This seemed to me to contain the whole philosophy of the matter; and I respected the keenness of her suggestion, though it led me to an opposite conclusion.

INFERIOR TO MAN, AND NEAR TO ANGELS

If it were anywhere the custom to disfranchise persons of superior virtue because of their virtue, and to present others with the ballot, simply because they had been in the state prison, — then the exclusion of women from political rights would be a high compliment, no doubt. But I can find no record in history of any such legislation, unless so far as it is contained in the doubtful tradition of the Tuscan city of Pistoia, where men are said to have been ennobled as a punishment for crime. Among us crime may often be a covert means of political prominence, but it is not the ostensible ground; nor are people habitually struck from the voting-lists for performing some rare and eminent service, such as saving human life, or reading every word of a presidential message. If a man has been President of the United States, we do not disfranchise him thenceforward; if he has been governor, we do not declare him thenceforth ineligible to the office of United States senator. On the contrary, the supposed reward of high merit is to give higher civic privileges. Sometimes these are even forced on unwilling recipients, as when Plymouth Colony in 1633 imposed a fine of twenty pounds on any one who should refuse the office of governor.

It is utterly contrary to all tradition and precedent, therefore, to suppose that women have been hitherto disfranchised because of any supposed superiority. Indeed, the theory is self-annihilating, and has always involved all supporters in hopeless inconsistency. Thus the Southern slaveholders were wont to argue that a negro was only blest when a slave, and there was no such inhumanity as to free him. Then, if a slave happened to save his master's life, he was rewarded by emancipation immediately, amid general applause. The act refuted the theory. And so, every time we have disfranchised a rebel, or presented some eminent foreigner with the freedom of a city, we have recognized that enfranchisement, after all, means honor, and disfranchisement implies disgrace.

I do not see how any woman can avoid a thrill of indignation when she first opens her eyes to the fact that it is really contempt, not reverence, that has so long kept her sex from an equal share of legal, political, and educational rights. In spite of the duty paid to individual women as mothers, in spite of the reverence paid by the Greeks and the Germanic races to certain women as priestesses and sibyls, the fact remains that this sex has been generally recognized, in past ages of the human race, as stamped by hopeless inferiority, not by angelic

superiority. This is carried so far that a certain taint of actual inferiority is held to attach to women, in barbarous nations. Among certain Indian tribes, the service of the gods is defiled if a woman but touches the implements of sacrifice; and a Turk apologizes to a Christian physician for the mention of the women of his family, in the very phrases used to soften the mention of any degrading creature. Mr. Leland tells us that among the English gypsies any object that a woman treads upon, or sweeps with the skirts of her dress, is destroyed or made away with in some way, as unfit for use. In reading the history of manners, it is easy to trace the steps from this degradation up to the point now attained, such as it is. Yet even the habit of physiological contempt is not gone, and I do not see how any one can read history without seeing, all around us, in society, education, and politics, the tradition of inferiority. Many laws and usages which in themselves might not strike all women as intrinsically worth striving for — as the exclusion of women from colleges or from the ballot-box — assume great importance to a woman's self-respect, when she sees in these the plain survival of the same contempt that once took much grosser forms.

And it must be remembered that in civilized communities the cynics, who still frankly ex-

press this utter contempt, are better friends to women than the flatterers, who conceal it in the drawing-room, and only utter it freely in the lecture-room, the club, and the "North American Review." Contempt at least arouses pride and energy. To be sure, in the face of history, the contemptuous tone in regard to women seems to me untrue, unfair, and dastardly; but, like any other extreme injustice, it leads to reaction. It helps to awaken women from that shallow dream of self-complacency into which flattery lulls them. There is something tonic in the manly arrogance of Fitzjames Stephen, who derides the thought that the marriage contract can be treated as in any sense a contract between equals; but there is something that debilitates in the dulcet counsel given by an anonymous gentleman, in an old volume of the "Ladies' Magazine" that lies before me,— "She ought to present herself as a being made to please, to love, and to seek support; *a being inferior to man, and near to angels.*"

IX

OBJECTIONS TO SUFFRAGE

"When you were weak and I was strong, I toiled for you. Now you are strong and I am weak. Because of my work for you, I ask your aid. I ask the ballot for myself and my sex. As I stood by you, I pray you stand by me and mine."
—CLARA BARTON.

[Appeal to the returned soldiers of the United States, written from Geneva, Switzerland, by Clara Barton, invalided by long service in the hospitals and on the field during the civil war.]

THE FACT OF SEX

It is constantly said that the advocates of woman suffrage ignore the fact of sex. On the contrary, they seem to me to be the only people who do not ignore it.

Were there no such thing as sexual difference, the wrong done to woman by disfranchisement would be far less. It is precisely because her traits, habits, needs, and probable demands are distinct from those of man, that she is not, never was, never can, and never will be, justly represented by him. It is not merely that a vast number of human individuals are disfranchised; it is not even because in many of our States

the disfranchisement extends to a majority, that the evil is so great; it is not merely that we disfranchise so many units and tens: but we exclude a special element, a peculiar power, a distinct interest, — in a word, a sex.

Whether this sex is more or less wise, more or less important, than the other sex, does not affect the argument: it is a sex, and, being such, is more absolutely distinct from the other than is any mere race from any other race. The more you emphasize the fact of sex, the more you strengthen our argument. If the white man cannot justly represent the negro, — although the two races are now so amalgamated that not even the microscope can always decide to which race one belongs, — how impossible that one sex should stand in legislation for the other sex!

This is so clear that, so soon as it is stated, there is a shifting of the ground. "But consider the danger of introducing the sexual influence into legislation!" . . . Then we are sure to be confronted with the case of Miss Vinnie Ream, the sculptor. See how that beguiling damsel cajoled all Congress into buying poor statues! they say. If one woman could do so much, how would it be with one hundred? Precisely the Irishman's argument against the use of pillows: he had put one feather on a

claim for the disfranchised half of the human race, — open instead of secret influence; the English tradition instead of the French; women as rulers, not as kings' mistresses; women as legislators, not merely as lobbyists; women employing in legitimate form that power which they will otherwise illegitimately wield. This is all our demand.

HOW WILL IT RESULT? "It would be a great convenience, my hearers," said old Parson Withington of Newbury, "if the moral of a fable could only be written at the beginning of it, instead of the end. But it never is." Commonly the only thing to be done is to get hold of a few general principles, hold to those, and trust that all will turn out well. No matter how thoroughly a reform may have been discussed, — negro emancipation or free-trade, for instance, — it is a step in the dark at last, and the detailed results never turn out to be precisely according to the programme.

An "esteemed correspondent," who has written some of the best things yet said in America in behalf of the enfranchisement of woman, writes privately to express some solicitude, since, as she thinks, we are not ready for it yet. "I am convinced," she writes, "of the abstract right of women to vote; but all I see of the

conduct of the existing women, into whose hands this change would throw the power, inclines me to hope that this power will not be conceded till education shall have prepared a class of women fit to take the responsibilities."

Gradual emancipation, in short! — for fear of trusting truth and justice to take care of themselves. Who knew, when the negroes were set free, whether they would at first use their freedom well, or ill? Would they work? would they avoid crimes? would they justify their freedom? The theory of education and preparation seemed very plausible. Against that, there was only the plain theory which Elizabeth Heyrick first announced to England, — "Immediate, unconditional emancipation." "The best preparation for freedom is freedom." What was true of the negroes then is true of women now.

"The lovelier traits of womanhood," writes earnestly our correspondent, "simplicity, faith, guilelessness, unfit them to conduct public affairs, where one must deal with quacks and charlatans. . . . We are not all at once 'as gods, knowing good and evil;' and the very innocency of our lives, and the habits of pure homes, unfit us to manage a certain class who will flock to this standard."

But the basis of all republican government is in the assumption that good is ultimately

stronger than evil. If we once abandon this, our theory has gone to pieces, at any rate. If we hold to it, good women are no more helpless and useless than good men. The argument that would here disfranchise women has been used before now to disfranchise clergymen. I believe that in some States they are still disfranchised; and, if they are not, it is partly because good is found to be as strong as evil, after all, and partly because clergymen are not found to be so angelically good as to be useless. I am very confident that both these truths will be found to apply to women also.

Whatever else happens, we may be pretty sure that one thing will. The first step towards the enfranchisement of women will blow to the winds the tradition of the angelic superiority of women. Just so surely as women vote, we shall occasionally have women politicians, women corruptionists, and women demagogues. Conceding, for the sake of courtesy, that none such now exist, they will be born as inevitably, after enfranchisement, as the frogs begin to pipe in the spring. Those who doubt it ignore human nature; and, if they are not prepared for this fact, they had better consider it in season, and take sides accordingly. In these pages, at least, they have been warned.

What then? Suppose women are not "as

gods, knowing good and evil:" they are not to be emancipated as gods, but as fallible human beings. They are to come out of an ignorant innocence, that may be only weakness, into a wise innocence that will be strength. It is too late to remand American women into a Turkish or Jewish tutelage: they have emerged too far not to come farther. In a certain sense, no doubt, the butterfly is safest in the chrysalis. When the soft thing begins to emerge, the world certainly seems a dangerous place; and it is hard to say what will be the result of the emancipation. But when she is once half out, there is no safety for the pretty creature but to come the rest of the way, and use her wings.

I HAVE ALL THE RIGHTS I WANT

When Dr. Johnson had published his English Dictionary, and was asked by a lady how he chanced to make a certain mistake that she pointed out, he answered, "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." I always feel disposed to make the same comment on the assertion of any woman that she has all the rights she wants. For every woman is, or may be, or might have been, a mother. And when she comes to know that even now, in many parts of the Union, a married mother has no legal right to her child, I should think her tongue would cleave to her

mouth before she would utter those foolish words again.

All the things I ever heard or read against slavery did not fix in my soul such a hostility to it as a single scene in a Missouri slave-jail many years ago. As I sat there, a purchaser came in to buy a little girl to wait on his wife. Three little sisters were brought in, from eight to twelve years old: they were mulattoes, with sweet, gentle manners; they had evidently been taken good care of, and their pink calico frocks were clean and whole. The gentleman chose one of them, and then asked her, good-naturedly enough, if she did not wish to go with him. She burst into tears, and said, "I want to stay with my mother." But her tears were as powerless, of course, as so many salt drops from the ocean.

That was all. But all the horrors of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the stories told me by fugitive slaves, the scarred backs I afterwards saw by dozens among colored recruits, did not impress me as did that hour in the jail. The whole probable career of that poor, wronged, motherless, shrinking child passed before me in fancy. It seemed to me that a man must be utterly lost to all manly instincts who would not give his life to overthrow such a system. It seemed to me that the woman who could tolerate, much

less defend it, could not herself be true, could not be pure, or must be fearfully and grossly ignorant.

You acquiesce, fair lady. You say it was horrible indeed, but, thank God! it is past. Past? Is it so? Past, if you please, as to the law of slavery, but as to the legal position of woman still a fearful reality. It is not many years since a scene took place in a Boston court-room, before Chief Justice Chapman, which was worse, in this respect, than that scene in St. Louis, inasmuch as the mother was present when the child was taken away, and the wrong was sanctioned by the highest judicial officer of the State. Two little girls, who had been taken from their mother by their guardian, their father being dead, had taken refuge with her against his wishes; and he brought them into court under a writ of habeas corpus, and the court awarded them to him as against their mother. "The little ones were very much affected," says the "Boston Herald," "by the result of the decision which separated them from their mother; and force was required to remove them from the court-room. The distress of the mother was also very evident."

There must have been some special reason, you say, for such a seeming outrage: she was a bad woman. No: she was "a lady of the

highest respectability." No charge was made against her; but, being left a widow, she had married again; and for that, and that only, so far as appears, the court took from her the guardianship of her own children, — bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh, the children for whom she had borne the deepest physical agony of womanhood, — and awarded them to somebody else.

You say, "But her second husband might have misused the children." Might? So the guardian might, and that where they had no mother to protect them. Had the father been left a widower, he might have made a half-dozen successive marriages, have brought stepmother after stepmother to control these children, and no court could have interfered. The father is recognized before the law as the natural guardian of the children. The mother, even though she be left a widow, is not. The consequence is a series of outrages of which only a few scattered instances come before the public; just as in slavery, out of a hundred little girls sold away from their parents, only one case might ever be mentioned in any newspaper.

This case led to an alteration of the law in Massachusetts, but the same thing might yet happen in some States of the Union. The possibility of a single such occurrence shows that

there is still a fundamental wrong in the legal position of woman. And the fact that most women do not know it only deepens the wrong — as Dr. Channing said of the contentment of the Southern slaves. The mass of men, even of lawyers, pass by such things, as they formerly passed by the facts of slavery.

There is no lasting remedy for these wrongs, except to give woman the political power to protect herself. There never yet existed a race, nor a class, nor a sex, which was noble enough to be trusted with political power over another sex, or class, or race. It is for self-defence that woman needs the ballot. And in view of a single such occurrence as I have given, I charge that woman who professes to have "all the rights she wants," either with a want of all feeling of motherhood, or with "ignorance, madam, pure ignorance."

SENSE ENOUGH TO VOTE

There is one special point on which men seem to me rather insincere toward women. When they speak to women, the objection made to their voting is usually that they are too angelic. But when men talk to each other, the general assumption is, that women should not vote because they have not brains enough — or, as old Theophilus Parsons wrote a century ago, have not "a sufficient acquired discretion."

It is an important difference. Because, if women are too angelic to vote, they can only be fitted for it by becoming more wicked, which is not desirable. On the other hand, if there is no objection but the want of brains, then our public schools are equalizing that matter fast enough. Still, there are plenty of people who have never got beyond this objection. Listen to the first discussion that you encounter among men on this subject, wherever they may congregate. Does it turn upon the question of saintliness, or of brains? Let us see.

I travelled the other day upon the Boston and Providence Railroad with a party of mechanics, mostly English and Scotch. They were discussing this very question, and, with the true English habit, thought it was all a matter of property. Without it a woman certainly should not vote, they said; but they all favored, to my surprise, the enfranchisement of women of property. "As a general rule," said the chief speaker, "a woman that 's got property has got sense enough to vote."

There it was! These foreigners, who had found their own manhood by coming to a land which not only the Pilgrim Fathers but the Pilgrim Mothers had settled, and subdued, and freed for them, were still ready to disfranchise most of the daughters of those mothers, on the

ground that they had not "sense enough to vote." I thanked them for their blunt truthfulness, so much better than the flattery of most of the native-born.

My other instance shall be a conversation overheard in a railway station near Boston, between two intelligent citizens, who had lately listened to Anna Dickinson. "The best of it was," said one, "to see our minister introduce her." "Wonder what the Orthodox churches would have said to that ten years ago?" said the other. "Never mind," was the answer. "Things have changed. What I think is, it 's all in the bringing up. If women were brought up just as men are, they 'd have just as much brains." (Brains again!) "That 's what Beecher says. Boys are brought up to do business, and take care of themselves: that 's where it is. Girls are brought up to dress and get married. Start 'em alike! That 's what Beecher says. Start 'em alike, and see if girls have n't got just as much brains."

"Still harping on my daughter," and on the condition of her brains! It is on this that the whole question turns, in the opinion of many men. Ask ten men their objections to woman suffrage. One will plead that women are angels. Another fears discord in families. Another points out that women cannot fight, — he him-

self being very likely a non-combatant. Another quotes St. Paul for this purpose, — not being, perhaps, in the habit of consulting that authority on any other point. But with the others, very likely, everything will turn on the question of brains. They believe, or think they believe, that women have not sense enough to vote. They may not say so to women, but they habitually say it to men. If you wish to meet the common point of view of masculine voters, you must find it here.

It is fortunate that it is so. Of all points, this is the easiest to settle; for every intelligent woman, even if she be opposed to woman suffrage, helps to settle it. Every good lecture by a woman, every good book written by one, every successful business enterprise carried on, helps to decide the question. Every class of girls that graduates from every good school helps to pile up the argument on this point. And the vast army of women, constituting nine out of ten of the teachers in our American schools, may appeal as logically to their pupils, and settle the argument based on brains. "If we had sense enough to educate you," they may say to each graduating class of boys, "we have sense enough to vote beside you."

"The ladies actively working to secure the coöperation of their sex in caucuses and citizens' conventions are not actuated by love of notoriety, and are not, therefore, to be classed with the absolute woman suffragists." — Boston Daily Transcript, Sept. 1, 1879.

AN INFELICITOUS EPITHET

When the eloquent colored abolitionist, Charles Remond, once said upon the platform that George Washington, having been a slaveholder, was a villain, Wendell Phillips remonstrated by saying, "Charles, the epithet is not felicitous." Reformers are apt to be pelted with epithets quite as ill-chosen. How often has the charge figured in history, that they were "actuated by love of notoriety"! The early Christians, it was generally believed, took a positive pleasure in being thrown to the lions, under the influence of this motive; and at a later period there was a firm conviction that the Huguenots consented readily to being broken on the wheel, or sawed in pieces between two boards, and felt amply rewarded by the pleasure of being talked about. During the whole anti-slavery movement, while the abolitionists were mobbed, fined, and imprisoned, — while they were tabooed by good society, depleted of their money, kept out of employment, by the mere fact of their abolitionism, — there never was a moment when their motive was not considered by many persons to be the love of notoriety. Why should the advocates of woman suffrage expect any different treatment now?

It is not necessary, in order to dispose of this charge, to claim that all reformers are heroes or saints. Even in the infancy of any reform, it takes along with it some poor material; and unpleasant traits are often developed by the incidents of the contest. Doubtless many reformers attain to a certain enjoyment of a fight, at last: it is one of the dangerous tendencies which those committed to this vocation must resist. But, so far as my observation goes, those who engage in reform for the sake of notoriety generally hurt the reform so much that they render it their chief service when they leave it; and this happy desertion usually comes pretty early in their career. The besetting sin of reformers is not, so far as I can judge, the love of notoriety, but the love of power and of flattery within their own small circle, — a temptation quite different from the other, both in its origin and its results.

Notoriety comes so soon to a reformer that its charms, whatever they may be, soon pall upon the palate, just as they do in case of a popular poet or orator, who is so used to seeing himself in print that he hardly notices it. I suppose there is no young person so modest that he does not, on first seeing his name in a newspaper, cut out the passage with a certain tender solicitude, and perhaps purchase a few

extra copies of the fortunate journal. But when the same person has been battered by a score or two of years in successive unpopular reforms, I suppose that he not only would leave the paper uncut or unpurchased, but would hardly take the pains even to correct a misstatement, were it asserted that he had inherited a fortune or murdered his grandmother. The moral is that the love of notoriety is soon amply filled, in a reformer's experience, and that he will not, as a rule, sacrifice home and comfort, money and friends, without some stronger inducement. This is certainly true of most of the men who have interested themselves in this particular movement, the "weak-minded men," as the reporters, with witty antithesis, still describe them; and it must be much the same with the "strong-minded women" who share their base career.

And it is to be remembered, above all, that, considered as an engine for obtaining notoriety, the woman-suffrage agitation is a great waste of energy. The same net result could have been won with far less expenditure in other ways. There is not a woman connected with it who could not have achieved far more real publicity as a manager of charity fairs or as a sensation letter-writer. She could have done this, too, with far less trouble, without the loss of a single genteel friend, without forfeiting a

single social attention, without having a single ill-natured thing said about her — except perhaps that she bored people, a charge to which the highest and lowest forms of prominence are equally open. Nay, she might have done even more than this, if notoriety was her sole aim: for she might have become a "variety" minstrel or a female pedestrian; she might have written a scandalous novel; she might have got somebody to aim at her that harmless pistol, which has helped the fame of so many a wandering actress, while its bullet somehow never hits anything but the wall. All this she might have done, and obtained a notoriety beyond doubt. Instead of this, she has preferred to prowl about, picking up a precarious publicity by giving lectures to willing lyceums, writing books for eager publishers, organizing schools, setting up hospitals, and achieving for her sex something like equal rights before the law. Either she has shown herself, as a seeker after notoriety, to be a most foolish or ill-judging person, — or else, as was said of Washington's being a villain, "the epithet is not felicitous."

THE ROB ROY THEORY

"The Saturday Review," in an article which denounces all equality in marriage laws and all plans of woman suffrage, admits frankly the practical

obstacles in the way of the process of voting. "Possibly the presence of women as voters would tend still further to promote order than has been done by the ballot." It plants itself wholly on one objection, which goes far deeper, thus:—

"If men choose to say that women are not their equals, women have nothing to do but to give in. Physical force, the ultimate basis of all society and all government, must be on the side of the men; and those who have the key of the position will not consent permanently to abandon it."

It is a great pleasure when an opponent of justice is willing to fall back thus frankly upon the Rob Roy theory:—

"The good old rule
Sufficeth him, the simple plan
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

It is easy, I think, to show that the theory is utterly false, and that the basis of civilized society is not physical force, but, on the contrary, brains.

In the city where the "Saturday Review" is published, there are three regiments of "Guards" which are the boast of the English army, and are believed by their officers to be the finest troops in the world. They have deteriorated in size since the Crimean war; but I

believe that the men of one regiment still average six feet two inches in height; and I am sure that nobody ever saw them in line without noticing the contrast between these magnificent men and the comparatively puny officers who command them. These officers are from the highest social rank in England, the governing classes; and if it were the whole object of this military organization to give a visible proof of the utter absurdity of the "Saturday Review's" theory, it could not be better done. There is no country in Europe, I suppose, where the hereditary aristocracy is physically equal to that of England, or where the intellectual class has so good a physique. But set either the House of Lords or the "Saturday Review" contributors upon a hand-to-hand fight against an equal number of "navvies" or "costermongers," and the patricians would have about as much chance as a crew of Vassar girls in a boat-race with Yale or Harvard. Take the men of England alone, and it is hardly too much to say that physical force, instead of being the basis of political power in any class, is apt to be found in inverse ratio to it. In case of revolution, the strength of the governing class in any country is not in its physical, but in its mental power. Rank and money, and the power to influence and organize and command, are

merely different modifications of mental training, brought to bear by somebody.

In our country, without class distinctions, the same truth can be easily shown. Physical power lies mainly in the hands of the masses: wherever a class or profession possesses more than its numerical share of power, it has usually less than its proportion of physical vigor. This is easily shown from the vast body of evidence collected during our civil war. In the volume containing the medical statistics of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau, we have the tabulated reports of about 600,000 persons subject to draft, and of about 500,000 recruits, substitutes, and drafted men; showing the precise physical condition of more than a million men.

It appears that, out of the whole number examined, rather more than 257 in each 1000 were found unfit for military service. It is curious to see how generally the physical power among these men is in inverse ratio to the social and political prominence of the class they represent. Out of 1000 unskilled laborers, for instance, only 348 are physically disqualified; among tanners, only 216; among iron-workers, 189. On the other hand, among lawyers, 544 out of 1000 are disqualified; among journalists, 740; among clergymen, 954. Grave divines

are horrified at the thought of admitting women to vote, since they cannot fight; though not one in twenty of their own number is fit for military duty, if he volunteered. Of the editors who denounce woman suffrage, only about one in four could himself carry a musket; while of the lawyers who fill Congress, the majority could not be defenders of their country, but could only be defended. If we were to distribute political power with reference to the "physical basis" which the "Saturday Review" talks about, it would be a wholly new distribution, and would put things more hopelessly upside down than did the worst phase of the French Commune. If, then, a political theory so utterly breaks down when applied to men, why should we insist on resuscitating it in order to apply it to women? The truth is that as civilization advances the world is governed more and more unequivocally by brains; and whether those brains are deposited in a strong body or a weak one becomes a matter of less and less importance. But it is only in the very first stage of barbarism that mere physical strength makes mastery; and the long head has controlled the long arm since the beginning of recorded time.

And it must be remembered that even these statistics very imperfectly represent the case.

They do not apply to the whole male sex, but actually to the picked portion only, to the men presumed to be of military age, excluding the very old and the very young. Were these included, the proportion unfit for military duty would of course be far greater. Moreover, it takes no account of courage or cowardice, patriotism or zeal. How much all these considerations tell upon the actual proportion may be seen from the fact that in the town where I am writing, for instance, out of some twelve thousand inhabitants and about three thousand voters, there are only some three hundred who actually served in the civil war, — a number too small to exert a perceptible influence on any local election. When we see the community yielding up its voting power into the hands of those who have actually done military service, it will be time enough to exclude women for not doing such service. If the alleged physical basis operates as an exclusion of all non-combatants, it should surely give a monopoly to the actual combatants.

THE VOTES OF NON-COMBATANTS

The tendency of modern society is not to concentrate power in the hands of the few, but to give a greater and greater share to the many. Read Froissart's Chronicles, and Scott's

novels of chivalry, and you will see how thoroughly the difference between patrician and plebeian was then a difference of physical strength. The knight, being better nourished and better trained, was apt to be the bodily superior of the peasant, to begin with; and this strength was reinforced by armor, weapons, horse, castle, and all the resources of feudal warfare. With this greater strength went naturally the assumption of greater political power. To the heroes of "Ivanhoe," or "The Fair Maid of Perth," it would have seemed as absurd that yeomen and lackeys should have any share in the government, as it would seem to the members in an American legislature that women should have any such share. In a contest of mailed knights, any number of unarmed men were but so many women. As Sir Philip Sidney said, "The wolf asketh not how many the sheep may be."

But time and advancing civilization have tended steadily in one direction. "He giveth power to the weak, and to them who have no might He increaseth strength." Every step in the extension of political rights has consisted in opening them to a class hitherto humbler. From kings to nobles, from nobles to burghers, from burghers to yeomen; in short, from strong to weak, from high to low, from rich to poor.

All this is but the unconscious following out of one sure principle, — that legislation is mainly for the protection of the weak against the strong, and that for this purpose the weak must be directly represented. The strong are already protected by their strength: it is the weak who need all the vantage-ground that votes and legislatures can give them. The feudal chiefs were stronger without laws than with them. "Take care of yourselves in Sutherland," was the anxious message of the old Highlander: "the law has come as far as Tain." It was the peaceful citizen who needed the guaranty of law against brute force.

But can laws be executed without brute force? Not without a certain amount of it, but that amount under civilization grows less and less. Just in proportion as the masses are enfranchised, statutes execute themselves without crossing bayonets. "In a republic," said De Tocqueville, "if laws are not always respectable, they are always respected." If every step in freedom has brought about a more peaceable state of society, why should that process stop at this precise point? Besides, there is no possibility in nature of a political division in which all the men shall be on one side and all the women on the other. The mutual influence of the sexes forbids it. The

very persons who hint at such a fear refute themselves at other times, by arguing that "women will always be sufficiently represented by men," or that "every woman will vote as her husband thinks, and it will merely double the numbers." As a matter of fact, the law will prevail in all English-speaking nations: a few men fighting for it will be stronger than many fighting against it; and if those few have both the law and the women on their side, there will be no trouble.

The truth is that in this age *cedant arma togæ:* it is the civilian who rules on the throne or behind it, and who makes the fighting-men his mere agents. Yonder policeman at the corner looks big and formidable: he protects the women and overawes the boys. But away in some corner of the City Hill there is some quiet man, out of uniform, perhaps a consumptive or a dyspeptic or a cripple, who can overawe the burliest policeman by his authority as city marshal or as mayor. So an army is but a larger police; and its official head is that plain man at the White House, who makes or unmakes, not merely brevet-brigadiers, but major-generals in command, — who can by the stroke of the pen convert the most powerful man of the army into the most powerless. Take away the occupant of the position, and

put in a woman, and will she become impotent because her name is Elizabeth or Maria Theresa? It is brains that more and more govern the world; and whether those brains be on the throne, or at the ballot-box, they will soon make the owner's sex a subordinate affair. If woman is also strong in the affections, so much the better. "Win the hearts of your subjects," said Lord Burleigh to Queen Elizabeth, "and you will have their hands and purses."

War is the last appeal, and happily in these days the rarest appeal, of statesmanship. In the multifarious other duties that make up statesmanship we cannot spare the brains, the self-devotion, and the enthusiasm of woman. One of the most important treaties of modern history, the peace of Cambray, in 1529, was negotiated, after previous attempts had failed, by two women, — Margaret, aunt of Charles V., and Louisa, mother of Francis I. Voltaire said that Christina of Sweden was the only sovereign of her time who maintained the dignity of the throne against Mazarin and Richelieu. Frederick the Great said that the Seven Years' War was waged against three women, — Elizabeth of Russia, Maria Theresa, and Mme. Pompadour. There is nothing impotent in the statesmanship of women when they are admitted to exercise it: they are only powerless

for good when they are obliged to obtain by wheedling and flattery a sway that should be recognized, responsible, and limited.

MANNERS REPEAL LAWS

There is in Boswell's "Life of Johnson" a correspondence which is well worth reading by both advocates and opponents of woman suffrage. Boswell, who was of an old Scotch family, had a difference of opinion with his father about an entailed estate which had descended to them. Boswell wished the title so adjusted as to cut off all possibility of female heirship. His father, on the other hand, wished to recognize such a contingency. Boswell wrote to Johnson in 1776 for advice, urging a series of objections, physiological and moral, to the inheritance of a family estate by a woman; though, as he magnanimously admits, "they should be treated with great affection and tenderness, and always participate of the prosperity of the family."

Dr. Johnson, for a wonder, took the other side, defended female heirship, and finally summed up thus: "It cannot but occur that women have natural and equitable claims as well as men, and these claims are not to be capriciously or lightly superseded or infringed. When fiefs inspired military service, it is easily

discerned why females could not inherit them; but the reason is at an end. *As manners make laws, so manners likewise repeal them.*"

This admirable statement should be carefully pondered by those who hold that suffrage should be only coextensive with military duty. The position that woman cannot properly vote because she cannot fight for her vote efficiently is precisely like the position of feudalism and of Boswell, that she could not properly hold real estate because she could not fight for it. Each position may have had some plausibility in its day, but the same current of events has made each obsolete. Those who in these days believe in giving woman the ballot argue precisely as Dr. Johnson did in 1776. Times have changed, manners have softened, education has advanced, public opinion now acts more forcibly; and the reference to physical force, though still implied, is implied more and more remotely. The political event of the age, the overthrow of American slavery, would not have been accomplished without the "secular arm" of Grant and Sherman, let us agree: but neither would it have been accomplished without the moral power of Garrison the non-resistant, and Harriet Beecher Stowe the woman. When the work is done, it is unfair to disfranchise any of the participants. Dr. Johnson was

right: "When fiefs [or votes] implied military service, it is easily discerned why women should not inherit [or possess] them; but the reason is at an end. As manners make laws, so manners likewise repeal them."

Under the feudal system it would have been absurd that women should hold real estate, for the next armed warrior could dispossess her. By Gail Hamilton's reasoning, it is equally absurd now: "One man is stronger than one woman, and ten men are stronger than ten women; and the nineteen millions of men in this country will subdue, capture, and execute or expel the nineteen millions of women just as soon as they set about it." Very well: why, then, do not all the landless men in a town unite, and take away the landed property of all the women? Simply because we now live in civilized society and under a reign of law; because those men's respect for law is greater than their appetite for property; or, if you prefer, because even those landless men know that their own interest lies, in the long-run, on the side of law. It will be precisely the same with voting. When any community is civilized up to the point of enfranchising women, it will be civilized up to the point of sustaining their vote, as it now sustains their property rights, by the whole material force of the community. When

the thing is once established, it will no more occur to anybody that a woman's vote is powerless because she cannot fight, than it now occurs to anybody that her title to real estate is invalidated by the same circumstance.

Woman is in the world; she cannot be got rid of: she must be a serf or an equal; there is no middle ground. We have outgrown the theory of serfdom in a thousand ways, and may as well abandon the whole. Women have now a place in society: their influence will be exerted, at any rate, in war and in peace, legally or illegally; and it had better be exerted in direct, legitimate, and responsible methods, than in ways that are dark, and by tricks that have not even the merit of being plain.

DANGEROUS VOTERS

One of the few plausible objections brought against women's voting is this: that it would demoralize the suffrage by letting in very dangerous voters; that virtuous women would not vote, and vicious women would. It is a very unfounded alarm.

For, in the first place, our institutions rest — if they have any basis at all — on this principle, that good is stronger than evil, that the majority of men really wish to vote rightly, and that only time and patience are needed to get the worst abuses righted. How any one can doubt this,

who watches the course of our politics, I do not see. In spite of the great disadvantage of having masses of ignorant foreign voters to deal with, — and of native black voters, who have been purposely kept in ignorance, — we certainly see wrongs gradually righted, and the truth by degrees prevail. Even the one great, exceptional case of New York city has been reached at last; and the very extent of the evil has brought its own cure. Now, why should this triumph of good over evil be practicable among men, and not apply to women also?

It must be either because women, as a class, are worse than men, — which will hardly be asserted, — or because, for some special reason, bad women have an advantage over good women such as has no parallel in the other sex. But I do not see how this can be. Let us consider.

It is certain that good women are not less faithful and conscientious than good men. It is generally admitted that those most opposed to suffrage will very soon, on being fully enfranchised, feel it their duty to vote. They may at first misuse the right through ignorance, but they certainly will not shirk it. It is this conscientious habit on which I rely without fear. Never yet, when public duty required, have American women failed to meet the emergency; and I am not afraid of it now. More-

over, when they are once enfranchised and their votes are needed, all the men who now oppose or ridicule the demand for suffrage will begin to help them to exercise it. When the wives are once enfranchised, you may be sure that the husbands will not neglect those of their own household: they will provide them with ballots, vehicles, and policemen, and will contrive to make the voting-places pleasanter than many parlors, and quieter than some churches.

On the other hand, it seems altogether probable that the very worst women, so far from being ostentatious in their wickedness upon election day, will, on the contrary, so disguise and conceal themselves as to deceive the very elect, and, if it were possible, the very policemen. For whatever party they may vote, they will contribute to make the voting-places as orderly as railway stations. These covert ways are the very habit of their lives, at least by daylight; and the women who have of late done the most conspicuous and open mischief in our community have done it, not in their true character as evil, but, on the contrary, under a mask of elevated purpose.

That women, when they vote, will commit their full share of errors I have always maintained. But that they will collectively misuse their power seems to me out of the question;

and that the good women are going to stay at home, and let bad women do the voting, appears quite as incredible. In fact, if they do thus, it is a fair question whether the epithets "good" and "bad" ought not, politically speaking, to change places. For it naturally occurs to every one, on election day, that the man who votes, even if he votes wrong, is really a better man, so far as political duties go, than the very loftiest saint who stays at home and prays that other people may vote right. And it is hard to see why it should be otherwise with women.

HOW WOMEN WILL LEGISLATE

It is often said that when women vote their votes will make no difference in the count, because they will merely duplicate the votes of their husbands and brothers. Then these same objectors go on and predict all sorts of evil things for which women will vote quite apart from their husbands and brothers. Moreover, the evils thus predicted are apt to be diametrically opposite. Thus Goldwin Smith predicts that women will be governed by priests, and then goes on to predict that women will vote to abolish marriage; not seeing that these two predictions destroy each other.

On the other hand, I think that the advocates of woman suffrage often err by claiming too

much, — as that all women will vote for peace, for total abstinence, against slavery, and the rest. It seems better to rest the argument on general principles, and not to seek to prophesy too closely. The only thing which I feel safe in predicting is that woman suffrage will be used, as it should be, for the protection of woman. Self-respect and self-protection, — these are, as has been already said, the two great things for which woman needs the ballot.

It is not in the nature of things, I take it, that a class politically subject can obtain justice from the governing class. Not the least of the benefits gained by political equality for the colored people of the South is that the laws now generally make no difference of color in penalties for crime. In slavery times there were dozens of crimes which were punished more severely by the statute if committed by a slave or a free negro than if done by a white. I feel very sure that under the reign of impartial suffrage we should see fewer such announcements as this, which I cut from a late New York "Evening Express:" —

"Last night Capt. Lowery, of the Twenty-seventh Precinct, made a descent upon the dance-house in the basement of 96 Greenwich Street, and arrested fifty-two men and eight women. The entire batch was brought before Justice Flammer, at the Tombs

Police Court, this morning. Louise Maud, the proprietoress, was held in five hundred dollars bail to answer at the Court of General Sessions. *The fifty-two men were fined three dollars each, all but twelve paying at once; and the eight women were fined ten dollars each, and sent to the Island for one month.*"

The italics are my own. When we reflect that this dance-house, whatever it was, was unquestionably sustained for the gratification of men, rather than of women; when we consider that every one of these fifty-two men came there, in all probability, by his own free will, and to spend money, not to earn it; and that probably a majority of the women were driven there by necessity or betrayal, or force or despair, — it would seem that even an equal punishment would have been cruel injustice to the women. But when we observe how trifling a penalty was three dollars each to these men, whose money was likely to go for riotous living in some form, and forty of whom had the amount of the fine in their pockets; and how hopelessly large an amount was ten dollars each to women who did not, probably, own even the clothes they wore, and who were to be sent to prison for a month in addition, — we see a kind of injustice which would stand a fair chance of being righted, I suspect, if women came into

power. Not that they would punish their own sex less severely; probably they would not: but they would put men more on a level as to the penalty.

It may be said that no such justice is to be expected from women; because women in what is called "society" condemn women for mere imprudence, and excuse men for guilt. But it must be remembered that in "society" guilt is rarely a matter of open proof and conviction, in case of men: it is usually a matter of surmise; and it is easy for either love or ambition to set the surmise aside, and to assume that the worst reprobate is "only a little wild." In fact, as Margaret Fuller pointed out years ago, how little conception has a virtuous woman as to what a dissipated young man really is! But let that same woman be a Portia, in the judgment-seat, or even a legislator or a voter, and let her have the unmistakable and actual offender before her, and I do not believe that she will excuse him for a paltry fine, and give the less guilty woman a penalty more than quadruple.

Women will also be sure to bring special sympathy and intelligent attention to the wrongs of children. Who can read without shame and indignation this report from "The New York Herald"?

THE CHILD-SELLING CASE.

Peter Hallock, committed on a charge of abducting Lena Dinser, a young girl thirteen years old, whom, it was alleged, her father, George Dinser, had sold to Hallock for purposes of prostitution, was again brought yesterday before Judge Westbrook in the Supreme Court Chambers, on the writ of habeas corpus previously obtained by Mr. William F. Howe, the prisoner's counsel. Mr. Howe claimed that Hallock could not be held on either section of the statute for abduction. Under the first section the complaint, he insisted, should set forth that the child was taken contrary to the wish and against the consent of her parents. On the contrary, the evidence, he urged, showed that the father was a willing party. Under the second section, it was contended that the prisoner could not be held, as there was no averment that the girl was of previous chaste character. Judge Westbrook, a brief counter argument having been made by Mr. Dana, held that the points of Mr. Howe were well taken, and ordered the prisoner's discharge.

Here was a father who, as the newspapers allege, had previously sold two other daughters, body and soul, and against whom the evidence seemed to be in this case clear. Yet through the defectiveness of the statute, or the remissness of the prosecuting attorney, he goes free, without even a trial, to carry on his infamous

traffic for other children. Grant that the points were technically well taken and irresistible, — though this is by no means certain, — it is very sure that there should be laws that should reach such atrocities with punishment, whether the father does or does not consent to his child's ruin; and that public sentiment should compel prosecuting officers to be as careful in framing their indictments where human souls are at stake as where the question is of dollars only. It is upon such matters that the influence of women will make itself felt in legislation.

INDIVIDUALS *vs.* CLASSES

As the older arguments against woman suffrage are abandoned, we hear more and more of the final objection, that the majority of women have not yet expressed themselves on the subject. It is common for such reasoners to make the remark, that if they knew a given number of women — say fifty, or a hundred, or five hundred — who honestly wished to vote, they would favor it. Produce that number of unimpeachable names, and they say that they have reconsidered the matter, and must demand more, — perhaps ten thousand. Bring ten thousand, and the demand again rises. "Prove that the majority of women wish to vote, and they shall vote." "Precisely," we say: "give us a chance to prove it

by taking a vote;" and they answer, "By no means."

And, in a certain sense, they are right. It ought not to be settled that way, — by dealing with woman as a class, and taking the vote. The agitators do not merely claim the right of suffrage for her as a class: they claim it for each individual woman, without reference to any other. If there is only one woman in the nation who claims the right to vote, she ought to have it. In Oriental countries all legislation is for classes, and in England it is still mainly so. A man is expected to remain in the station in which he is born; or, if he leaves it, it is by a distinct process, and he comes under the influence, in various ways, of different laws. If the iniquities of the "Contagious Diseases" act in England, for instance, had not been confined in their legal application to the lower social grades, the act would never have passed. It was easy for men of the higher classes to legislate away the modesty of women of the lower classes; but if the daughter of an earl could have been arrested, and submitted to a surgical examination at the will of any policeman, as the daughter of a mechanic might be, the law would not have stood a day. So, through all our slave States, there was class legislation for every person of negro blood: the laws of crime, of

punishment, of testimony, were all adapted to classes, not individuals. Emancipation swept this all away, in most cases: classes ceased to exist before the law, so far as men at least were concerned; there were only individuals. The more progress, the less class in legislation. We claim the application of this principle as rapidly as possible to women.

Our community does not refuse permission for women to go unveiled till it is proved that the majority of women desire it; it does not even ask that question: if one woman wishes to show her face, it is allowed. If a woman wishes to travel alone, to walk the streets alone, the police protects her in that liberty. She is not thrust back into her house with the reproof, "My dear madam, at this particular moment the overwhelming majority of women are indoors: prove that they all wish to come out, and you shall come." On the contrary, she comes forth at her own sweet will: the policeman helps her tenderly across the street, and waves back with imperial gesture the obtrusive coal-cart. Some of us claim for each individual woman, in the same way, not merely the right to go shopping, but to go voting; not merely to show her face, but to show her hand.

There will always be many women, as there are many men, who are indifferent to voting.

For a time, perhaps always, there will be a larger percentage of this indifference among women. But the natural right to a share in the government under which one lives, and to a voice in making the laws under which one may be hanged, — this belongs to each woman as an individual; and she is quite right to claim it as she needs it, even though the majority of her sex still prefer to take their chance of the penalty, without perplexing themselves about the law. The demand of every enlightened woman who asks for the ballot — like the demand of every enlightened slave for freedom — is an individual demand; and the question whether they represent the majority of their class has nothing to do with it. For a republic like ours does not profess to deal with classes, but with individuals; since "the whole people covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, for the common good," as the constitution of Massachusetts says.

And, fortunately, there is such power in an individual demand that it appeals to thousands whom no abstract right touches. Five minutes with Frederick Douglass settled the question, for any thoughtful person, of that man's right to freedom. Let any woman of position desire to enter what is called "the lecture-field," to support herself and her children, and at once

all abstract objections to women's speaking in public disappear: her friends may be never so hostile to "the cause," but they espouse her individual cause; the most conservative clergyman subscribes for tickets, but begs that his name may not be mentioned. They do not admit that women, as a class, should speak, — not they; but for this individual woman they throng the hall. Mrs. Dahlgren abhors politics: a woman in Congress, a woman in the committee-room, — what can be more objectionable? But I observe that when Mrs. Dahlgren wishes to obtain more profit by her husband's inventions all objections vanish: she can appeal to Congressmen, she can address committees, she can, I hope, prevail. The individual ranks first in our sympathy: we do not wait to take the census of the "class." Make way for the individual, whether it be Mrs. Dahlgren pleading for the rights of property, or Lucy Stone pleading for the rights of the mother to her child.

DEFEATS BEFORE VICTORIES

After one of the early defeats in the War of the Rebellion, the commander of a Massachusetts regiment wrote home to his father: "I wish people would not write us so many letters of condolence. Our defeat seemed to trouble them much more than it troubles us. Did people suppose there

were to be no ups and downs? We expect to lose plenty of battles, but we have enlisted for the war."

It is just so with every successful reform. While enemies and half-friends are proclaiming its defeats, those who advocate it are rejoicing that they have at last got an army into the field to be defeated. Unless this war is to be an exception to all others, even the fact of having joined battle is a great deal. It is the first step. Defeat first; a good many defeats, if you please: victory by and by.

William Wilberforce, writing to a friend in the year 1817, said, "I continue faithful to the measure of Parliamentary reform brought forward by Mr. Pitt. I am firmly persuaded that at present a prodigious majority of the people of this country are adverse to the measure. In my view, so far from being an objection to the discussion, this is rather a recommendation." In 1832 the reform bill was passed.

In the first Parliamentary debate on the slave trade, Colonel Tarleton, who boasted to have killed more men than any one in England, pointing to Wilberforce and others, said, "The inspiration began on that side of the house;" then turning round, "The revolution has reached to this also, and reached to the height of fanaticism and frenzy." The first vote in the House

of Commons, in 1790, after arguments in the affirmative by Wilberforce, Pitt, Fox, and Burke, stood, ayes, 88; noes, 163: majority against the measure, 75. In 1807 the slave trade was abolished, and in 1834 slavery in the British colonies followed; and even on the very night when the latter bill passed, the abolitionists were taunted by Gladstone, the great Demerara slaveholder, with having toiled for forty years and done nothing. The Roman Catholic relief bill, establishing freedom of thought in England, had the same experience. It passed in 1829 by a majority of a hundred and three in the House of Lords, which had nine months before refused by a majority of forty-five to take up the question at all.

The English corn laws went down a quarter of a century ago, after a similar career of failures. In 1840 there were hundreds of thousands in England who thought that to attack the corn laws was to attack the very foundations of society. Lord Melbourne, the prime minister, said in Parliament, that "he had heard of many mad things in his life, but, before God, the idea of repealing the corn laws was the very maddest thing of which he had ever heard." Lord John Russell counselled the House to refuse to hear evidence on the operation of the corn laws. Six years after, in 1846, they were abolished forever.

How Wendell Phillips, in the anti-slavery meetings, used to lash pro-slavery men with such formidable facts as these, — and to quote how Clay and Calhoun and Webster and Everett had pledged themselves that slavery should never be discussed, or had proposed that those who discussed it should be imprisoned, — while, in spite of them all, the great reform was moving on, and the abolitionists were forcing politicians and people to talk, like Sterne's starling, nothing but slavery!

We who were trained in the light of these great agitations have learned their lesson. We expect to march through a series of defeats to victory. The first thing is, as in the anti-slavery movement, so to arouse the public mind as to make this the central question. Given this prominence, and it is enough for this year or for many years to come. Wellington said that there was no such tragedy as a victory, except a defeat. On the other hand, the next best thing to a victory is a defeat, for it shows that the armies are in the field. Without the unsuccessful attempt of to-day, no success to-morrow.

When Mrs. Frances Anne Kemble came to this country, she was amazed to find Americans celebrating the battle of Bunker Hill, which she had always heard claimed as a victory for

King George. Such it was doubtless called; but what we celebrated was the fact that the Americans there threw up breastworks, stood their ground, fired away their ammunition, — and were defeated. Thus the reformer, too, looking at his failures, often sees in them such a step forward, that they are the Bunker Hill of a new revolution. Give us plenty of such defeats, and we can afford to wait a score of years for the victories. They will come.

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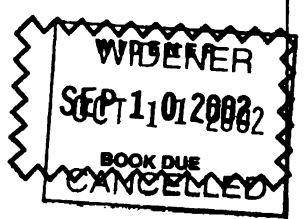

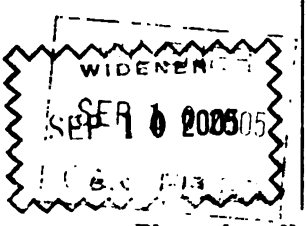

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